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The Zubiuŋ and Ba'ari people, however, do not accept this classification, which expresses the orientation of Tɛnzugu, without qualifications. The former admit their close territorial and political assimilation to Tongo, but they insist on their cultural distinctness, associating themselves, in this respect, with the Hill Talis. They quote in support other discriminatory indices than the Great Festivals. Firstly, like all the Talis, they do not have the avoidances of the first-born children distinctive of all Namoos (see below, Chap. V). On the contrary, all people of Zubiuŋ descent avoid eating tortoise (*pakur*), turtle (*mieŋ*), and cat (*sakoo*), the first two of which are also taboo to most of the Hill Talis. Secondly, they cite their mortuary and funeral ritual, the two points of crucial divergence being that they, like most of the Talis, dress the dead in a loin cover of sheepskin (*suona pɛhug*), whereas the Namoos use a goatskin (*suona buu*); and that to conclude a funeral they *yma ma'ala* with the sacrifice of many fowls, whereas the Namoos *yma wɔyar*—a totally different rite in which weapons and household utensils are offered to the departed spirit. Finally, Zubiuŋ people say: '*Tam dira tɛndaan, ti pu diit naam la*—We (like all Talis) have (lit. eat) the tɛndaanaship (i.e. the ritual office of Custodian of the Earth), we do not have the chiefship (like the Namoos).'

The Ba'ari people, with the added self-assurance due to their political independence of Tongo, declare themselves to be Talis on the same grounds, though their totemic avoidances differ from those of the hill folk. As a clinching argument they point out that the Great Festivals celebrated by the Talis form part of a cycle inaugurated by the senior Ba'ari tɛndaana.

Tongo shares the views of Zubiuŋ and Ba'ari about their relationship to the Talis. Very often at a Zubiuŋ funeral I could not help being amused at the behaviour of Tongo visitors. Close neighbours though they are of Zubiuŋ with which they have, individually, innumerable ties of cognatic and affinal kinship, they always adopted a posture in keeping with this structural cleavage. They would sit all together, at a little distance from the spot where the rites were in progress, punctiliously preserving an appearance of indifference, as befits outsiders. At the same time, Tongo people emphasize their specially close local and political ties with their immediate neighbours which mark the latter off from the Hill Talis in certain respects. Similar distinctions are made in the Sie district. A Tongo, Ba'ari, or Tɛnzugu man bound for Sie or Datɔk says, 'I am going to Nabrug (the country of the Namnam)', unless it is necessary to be more precise. The people of Sie and a number of the neighbouring settlements are Namoos; yet talking about farming they say: 'The Talis always sow first and then we follow'—referring thus to all the settlements south-west of Zoo. But when they are discussing war or marriage, ritual or chiefship, they distinguish between Tongo and Zoo on the one hand—*ti mabiis*, our brethren—and the real Talis on the other. At Duusi and Sie-Tɛndaaŋ dwell the senior tɛndaanas of the district, whose social and ritual status is identical with that of the tɛndaanas of the Tongo district. 'Talɔŋ' in contraposition to themselves means essentially someone from the vicinity

[000] Festivals and Social Cohesion in the Hinterland of the Gold Coast', *American Anthropologist*, vol. xxxviii, No. 4.

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of the Tong Hills; yet 'we and the Talis are one' they maintain. In proof of this they point out that their *Tɛŋən-lɛbəgət* Festival belongs to the same cycle as *Da'a* and *Bɔyaraam*, though they have but the vaguest hearsay knowledge of the esoteric ritual of these festivals. Their neighbours at Sie and Datɔk they call Namoos.

Note: For convenience of exposition we shall adopt the following convention in this book. Whenever we speak of all the inhabitants of Taleland, irrespective of their internal subdivisions, we shall use the name given to them by other outsiders and speak of them as *Tallensi*. When we wish to refer to that section of the Tallensi whom they themselves describe as the 'real Talis', we shall refer to them as *Talis*, distinguishing among them, when necessary, between the *Hill Talis*, who live on and around the Tong Hills, and the Talis of the Plain, who live nearer Tongo (i.e. Zubiuŋ, Gbizug, Ba'ari, Yayazuor).

Nomenclature and the Structural Scheme

This nomenclature reflects a structural scheme of considerable complexity. It points to institutional allegiances which segregate adjacent social units from each other and group together spatially dispersed units. The major cleavage it reveals is that between the Namoo communities, on the one hand, and the settlements of the real Talis and of those who claim to be akin to them, on the other. But it indicates, also, that there are other lines of division and bonds of union both within each major grouping and cutting across the cleavage. It is a cardinal principle of Tale social structure that every social grouping defined as a unit in one situation, or according to one principle, dissolves into an association of lesser and differentiated units in another situation or according to another principle. Variation in custom or in ideological emphasis is regarded by the natives as one of the most significant indices of group differentiation. It is also, as we shall see, an important factor of social integration.

It is therefore a topic of perennial interest to the natives to observe and comment on variations of usage and doctrine. The idea that identity of custom and belief is desirable or natural is inconceivable. Everybody adheres staunchly to the forms of social behaviour accepted in his own group without desiring to impose them on others. 'Look at the Namoos,' observed Ta'aŋ one day, 'don't they (i.e. different sections of the same clan) do different things at funeral ceremonies? But their use of a goat (in mortuary rites), that is all one. We Talis, again, using our sheep (in mortuary rites)—this is the same for all of us. But as for our ritual, we split up and do different things.' Each one with his father's ways, everyone with his ancestor's ways (*Sɔ ni u ba yɛl, ɔ ni u yaab yɛl*)—that is, every group has its distinctive ancestral customs—is a characteristic Tale aphorism. This attitude, emphasizing simultaneously community and differentiation, similarity of pattern, and divergence of detail, permeates Tale thought.

Myths of Origin

Whenever Tallensi discuss the cleavages in their society they trace

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started and transmitted them. Custom is not inviolable in its own right. It is compelling because it is the legacy of the ancestors.

These notions are perfectly explicit in the behaviour and thought of the natives, for whom they have a profound moral value. *Banam ndaa ŋ de, yaanam ndaa ŋ de*—our forefathers used to do it, our ancestors used to do it, is a recurrent formula in every ceremonial speech or ritual invocation during the Great Festivals. So the Samiitna'ab protesting his loyalty to traditional values and to the Kpata'arna'ab, in the latter's feud with the Gəlibdaana, exclaimed: 'It is the young men who are causing the trouble. They desire their cloths and their caps; but I know only what my ancestors did (*man mi la n-yaanam ndaa ŋ siem*). My ancestor (*n-yaab*) wore a skin and I, too, wear a skin; my ancestor knew nothing of cloth. I know only my forefathers' path and I adhere to that (*man mi la mbanam suor, man dɔla dɛnɛ*).'

In the same way, and because their social system engenders so strong a sense of the continuity and stability of their culture and social organization, Tallensi always stress the importance of passing on to their descendants the way of life bequeathed to them by their forefathers. At ceremonies or when disputes are argued out before a chief or a lineage head, it is not uncommon to hear the old men praise the young men who attend. 'Thus,' the old men say, 'they (the young men) will learn the customs (*yɛla*) of our ancestors.' Tallensi place an extremely high value on their social order. An individual or a particular corporate group might desire to alter his or its position in the society. A man might desire to have greater prestige or more power than his neighbours. A clan might strive to assert its supremacy over other clans, whether or not it is entitled to do so. No one would dream of trying to overthrow the whole social order or of agitating against the existing customs and values.

This does not mean that Tale customs never change, or that the Tallensi believe this to be the case, or invariably resist cultural changes. There have been many shifts in custom and usage during the past two decades. The imposition of peace and an embryonic judicial system have diminished the tensions that kept unrelated clans apart and so have made it unnecessary for them to over-emphasize the emblems and symbols of their separateness. Fifteen years ago men of a tendaana's clan used to observe strictly the taboo against wearing gowns and trousers, the distinctive garments of chiefs and men of chiefly (i.e. Namoo) clans. To-day the young men of tendaanas' clans all wear such clothes outside the territory with which they have direct ritual ties. By this simple compromise they make the best of both worlds, the old world of strictly defined local, genealogical, and politico-ritual exclusiveness and the new world of free movement, unrestricted social intercourse with all and sundry, and cheaper clothes. They wear the ancient prescribed garb of a skin and a loin-cloth on ritual occasions, especially during the Great Festivals, when they take a pride in advertising their politico-ritual status. This change of custom does not cut athwart the basic values and principles of Tale social organization. It has arisen because the young men of tendaanas' clans are as eager to display themselves in fine clothes as the young men of other clans, and because the wearing of clothes is economically easier to attain than

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178 formerly, and the social cleavages symbolized in this habit are no longer
184 so drastic as before. On the other hand, when the Gəlibdaana, in his overweening conceit, tried to copy the dress and the court procedure of
178 a Mampuru chief, there was wide indignation. The Chief of Tongo,
184 with whom he thus sought to equate himself, protested with such vigour
626 to the District Commissioner that the latter ordered the Gəlibdaana to stop his new practices. A man of enormous wealth and great power failed to get away with an innovation prepared with extravagant expense, because it ran counter to the politico-ritual structure of the society. He would never, incidentally, have dared to attempt this in former times, or, for that matter, have had the motive to do so. His behaviour is due to the arrogance of newly acquired wealth and power. But Tale institutions are still too strongly integrated to give way to such blatant subversion.

613 The notions of the continuity, persistence, and stability of their culture and social organization, so vital for the Tale outlook on life, have their roots in the lineage system. The whole social system of the Tallensi hinges on their lineage system with its religious counterpart, an elaborate ancestor cult. Unbroken continuity of descent, persistence of self-identical corporate units, stability of settlement—these are the intrinsic characteristics of the Tale lineage system. It requires the assumption, which the ancestor cult places beyond question, that the social structure of to-day is the same as it was in the past.

173 The Tallensi, therefore, have no history in the sense of a body of
773 authentic records of past events. The memories and reminiscences of
578 the old men are parts of their biographies and never contribute to the building up of a body of socially preserved history. Their myths and legends are one means of rationalizing and defining the structural relationships of group to group or the pattern of their institutions. Some of them have perhaps been built up around events which actually occurred and people who actually lived. It is, for example, quite probable that the Namoos actually came from Mampurugu originally, and that Mosuor really lived. The ancestor cult, the settled life, and the whole cultural idiom of the Tallensi lend support to such an inference, but there is no objective evidence. Tale myths and legends counterfeit history; they do not document it. They are a part of Tale social philosophy, projected into the past because the people think of their social order as continuous and persistent, handed down from generation to generation. A myth or a legend postulates a beginning for what has existed thus ever since. Even in our civilization naïve philosophers try to understand their society by similar devices. In the elaborately differentiated structure of Tale society there are regions of high tension where groups are coupled together in polar opposition and regions of low tension where the units of structure are articulated in complementary relations to one another. The myths epitomize the factors which differentiate one group from another. The greater the differentiation at any point the more elaborate is the legend. Hence we find the most definitive and conspicuous legend, that of Mosuor, associated with the relationship of greatest tension, that of the Namoos to the Talis. We find, also, that the emphasis of a myth is on the relationships which most precisely define the structural position

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of the group to which it refers. Owing to the balanced distribution of political and ceremonial functions between units of structure, the members of a group always overrate their own relative significance while non-members underrate its importance. These, sometimes contradictory, valuations find expression, also, in the way myths are presented. It is the technique of contraposition coming to the surface again. When, therefore, in these days new tensions develop, erupting sometimes into open conflict, they are inevitably reflected in the cast given to their myths of origin by interested parties.

The Major Cleavage in Tale Society

Our reconnaissance of the cultural landscape of the Tallensi has left us with a tangle of facts which do not fall into an obvious pattern. The reader may rest assured that his perplexity bears no comparison to that of an ethnographer seeking, for the first time, to understand Tale culture and social organization. The perspective changes as the investigator shifts his vantage point. The greatest puzzle of all is why there is so little apparent unity and coherence in an area of such dense and close habitation, carrying a population that has been sedentary for a long time, has a more or less homogeneous culture, and a strong sense of the continuity and stability of its social order. Leaving aside this puzzle, for the present, let us see what are the positive conclusions to which our survey leads.

The point of primary importance is that a major cleavage runs through the whole of Tale society. On the one side stand communities or parts of communities the members of which are generally agreed to be the descendants of immigrant Mamprusi. These are the Namoos. On the other side stand similar social groups who claim to be and are accepted as the descendants of the aboriginal inhabitants of the country and earlier immigrants whom they absorbed. This cleavage is given a symbolic formulation in myths of origin the historicity of which need not concern us.

This cleavage is so fundamental that it permeates the whole social outlook of the people. One sees it most vividly in the martial choruses chanted at important funerals. One of the high lights at the opening ceremonies of the funeral of an important person is a grand mimic war march (*dee*) of the men of the clan. In their finest clothes, weapons in hand, plumed helms on their heads, blowing whistles and accompanied by drummers, the men gather in lineage squadrons to march round the settlement, and eventually mass at the house of the funeral. They march irregularly in an unorganized mob with excited children trailing behind and women dancing on the flanks trilling the shrill *kpelomot* cry of elation. And as they march, especially as they approach the funeral house, they chant defiant challenges against their traditional enemies in the wars of former days. 'Yo ho!' they chant, 'we might rise one day at break of dawn to sally forth against certain people.' 'Is it not because of us', the Namoos chant taunting the Talis, 'that you have water to drink?' And again, 'Do you not mock at them, do you not laugh at them?' And now and then a man leaps forward, crouches scowling, pretends to shoot off an arrow, and cries scornfully, 'If it were not for the white man, by now we would be meeting them in battle'. It is all play-acting, but there is an

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184 764 undercurrent of passion and tension. When a *dee* parade reaches the border between adjacent Namoo and Talis settlements, there is a danger of a hostile demonstration from the other side and the older men have [574] to be very watchful. In 1936 a Tongo *dee* parade was attacked by a group of Gbeog men who were simply swept off their feet by the sight and sound of the armed mob of their traditional enemies.

184 One is constantly reminded of the cleavage between Namoos and non-Namoos in less dramatic ways, too, for they are for ever contrasting themselves. The Namoos scoff in private at the esoteric ritual practices of the Talis, the non-Namoos everywhere vaunt their superiority, as the true 'owners of the land', to the immigrant Namoos. And, at the same time, the politico-ritual leaders of each group keep jealous watch on those of the other to see that their mutual bonds of politico-ritual collaboration [123] are maintained. The most serious obstruction I had to overcome in my field work was the passive resistance of the Talis inspired by my initial association with the Tongo Namoos.

This cleavage comes to the fore in different ways in different parts of Taleland. It is most precisely worked out in the Tongo district, where it dominates the politico-ritual relations of group to group. It is justifiable, moreover, to see a connexion between this and the fact that the Tong Hills, the most conspicuous landmark in the country, are universally accepted as the centre of the 'real Talis'. Though many Hill Talis clans claim to be of immigrant descent, they are socially alined with the alleged aboriginal clans. This in itself would suggest that the cleavage between Namoos and non-Namoos is not an artifact of history but the expression of a deep-lying principle of social organization in Tale society.

184 796 Furthermore, it is evident that the natives visualize their society as composed of three major regions, the region of the 'real Talis', the region of Tongo and the clans adjacent to it, and the region of the clans adjacent to the Namnam. These regions are not, however, precisely defined socio-geographic territories. They overlap one another and merge into one another. They also overlap adjacent regions of non-Tale clans; but the Tallensi lay no stress on this, for they are differentiated by the index of the Great Festivals. Each region has its particular form of Harvest Festival, but the Great Festivals of the Tallensi constitute a single cycle. The festivals specific to the different regions follow a fixed sequence in relation to one another, and this is a matter of ritual obligation, not merely of convenience. Thus the very index which in certain perspectives and certain situations serves to differentiate the three regions of Tale society, in other perspectives and other situations serves to demonstrate their interdependence and overlapping.

184 796 648 In addition, the cycle of Great Festivals embraces clans of Gɔris, Namnam, and Mamprusi on the frontiers of Taleland. These clans take the cue for the date of their particular Harvest Festivals from neighbouring Tale clans, and in turn pass on the signal to other non-Tale clans, though they themselves fall outside the normal frame of social reference of the 'real Talis', upon whom the cycle pivots. The best example of this is Nuŋ, a tiny settlement between Biuŋ and the White Volta. Politically and ritually the people of Nuŋ are Mamprusi. The head of the settlement

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holds an important ritual office connected with the paramount chiefship of Mampurugu. But, as befits their interstitial socio-geographic position between the Mamprusi and the Tallensi, their Harvest Festival belongs to the Tale cycle and is, in fact, the last of one of the series constituting the cycle.

The differentiation of Taleland into lesser regions follows the same general principle as the differentiation of the Mole-Dagbane-speaking peoples into 'tribes'. A region is a socio-geographic segment of the society in which the communities that constitute it have a greater degree of interdependence and cohesion with one another than any of them have with other neighbouring communities. And this interdependence and cohesion is a function of the common interests symbolized in the Great Festivals. The regions overlap in so far as the communities belonging to one region have other interests in common with and other loyalties towards communities belonging to a neighbouring region.

This is the façade of Tale society. Behind it lie the bricks and mortar of the social structure. It is at that level of Tale social life that we must look for the foundations of the principles of social organization whose superficial action we have met with in this chapter.

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all of us (i.e. those of alleged slave descent as well). Who are you to decide who is or is not to be allowed to take part in sacrifices to him?' 618x 769

Crest-fallen, the supporters of the *status quo ante* begged the chief's pardon. It was a victory for the forces of community integration and a personal triumph for the chief over the cleavages due to the strict application of the canon of agnatic descent.

One of the chief's most intimate and influential elders commented to me afterwards, cautiously but with a hint of regret, that soon it would become impossible to withhold the chiefship from the accessory lineages now that they had practically won the right to participate in the most esoteric ritual cult of the true agnatic sodality. But the battle for consolidation is not yet over. The presence of some members of accessory lineages at the sacrifices was not part of a deliberate scheme to gain equality of status but was an unthinking reaction to the whole situation—the unusual publicity of the ceremony, its emphasis on an all-embracing solidarity of the whole sub-clan, and the chief's insistence on interpreting this to mean all the people of Tongo and not only those of true agnatic descent from Mosuor. Some elders of the accessory lineages were as dubious about the affair as some of the elders of authentic lineages. To take part in sacrifices from which one's fathers and grandfathers (*bapam ni yaanam*) had been rigidly excluded might well be an offence against one's own ancestors, even though the chief had taken the responsibility on himself. Members of accessory lineages do not resent their disfranchisement as a disability to be fought against, but accept it as part of the fixed order of society validated by the whole religious system. 618x

Thus these elders of the accessory lineages will not take it for granted that they now have the same rights as the authentic lineages. They are aware, also, that the occurrence has left behind a good deal of hidden resentment which may, at some future crisis, precipitate a violent reaction against the inclusion of accessory lineages in the ritual brotherhood of Mosuor biis. The forces of integration are strong at Tongo; but the genealogical cleavages in its lineage structure are so fundamental that this historic sacrifice may yet prove to be a warning against their abrogation rather than a precedent for it.

This episode brought out more vividly than anything I had previously encountered the significance of the ancestral graves and shrines, in particular of Mosuor's *bɔyar*, as the focus of the sub-clan's unity and the symbol of its corporate identity; for it was obvious that until they were able to participate on equal terms in sacrifices to this *bɔyar*, the accessory lineages would not be regarded as, or feel themselves to be, completely absorbed by the authentic lineages. 618x 778

Tongo, we may conclude, though it is more closely knit than Sie, is also an open system in its lineage structure; and this is equally true of Yamalag and Biuk. This peculiarity of the clan organization is more precisely apparent in the asymmetrical linkages of the component lineages of the different sub-clans of Mosuor biis. It is evident from our analysis that the ties of clanship summarily posited by the natives as linking *all* of Tongo with *all* of Sie, *all* of Yamalag, and *all* of Biuk, measured by the strict canon of agnatic descent as well as by the critical norms of clanship, 618x 184

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really hold only for the authentic lineages and, through them, for the assimilated lineages. The natives ignore this qualification when they make general statements about their clan organization—not because they reason obliquely, but on sound sociological grounds; for in their corporate relations with one another the four sub-clans treat one another as units irrespective of what the internal structure of each may be. Members of accessory lineages can represent the whole sub-clan in relation to one of the other sub-clans.

The Nexus of Clanship Ties

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Let us go back to Sie. The two lineages of Sie-datɔk have no ties of clanship with the distant *sunzɔp* of the Sie proper lineages to which they are attached by ties of clanship—that is, with Tongo, Yaməlǝg, or Biuk. But to balance this they are linked by ties of clanship to other units with which the authentic lineages of Sie have no such ties.

Gban is a Namoo community adjacent to Sie. The people of Gban (Gbandɛm) comprise three maximal lineages: (F) Dabierugyayardɛm; (G) Gbandaan yidɛm; and (H) Buŋwari yidɛm. Taken together these three units form a local clan; they are linked by all the ties of clanship, but they do not claim to have a single common ancestor or postulate the convergence of their lines of ascent as do the Sie-datɔkdɛm. (F) Dabierugyayardɛm claim to have been the first to settle there, as their ancestor came there from Kurugu—like the ancestors of Sie-datɔkdɛm, it will be remembered—before the founders of the other two maximal lineages arrived. But now they have all become *dɔyam bukɔ'la*—one consanguineous kin.

Sie-datɔk and Gban are linked by ties of clanship exactly in the same way as the component lineages of each are linked *inter se*, and as the two lineages of Sie-datɔk are linked to the authentic lineages of Sie to which they are attached, or as Sie and Tongo are related to each other.

Just as Sie proper has a closer bond with the segment of Kabuu yidɛm at Tongo than with the other Tongo lineages, so the senior lineage of Sie-datɔk, (D) Daaŋ yidɛm, has a special tie with the senior segment (Tasoo yidɛm) of (F) Dabierugyayardɛm at Gban. Their respective ancestors are said to have been kin (*mabiis*) whose common home was Kurugu. Hence these two lineages attend each others' sacrifices to their respective founding ancestors and are entitled to the portion of the sacrificial animal due to close *sunzɔp*, a hind leg (*gbɛr*). If there is a funeral among (D) Daaŋ yidɛm, representatives of (F) Dabierugyayardɛm will be sure to attend and assist as a matter both of loyalty and of duty; representatives of the other two Gban lineages may or may not turn up, as they please. It is not an obligation to do so, though they have clanship ties with Sie-datɔk. It is as if the primary tie of clanship between Gban and Sie-datɔk is that which links (F) Dabierugyayardɛm to (D) Daaŋ yidɛm and that this tie is merely extended to the other component lineages of the two units, through the effect of their bonds with the two lineages primarily interlinked. The relation is similar to that which obtains between any of the assimilated lineages of Tongo and the authentic

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CHAPTER V

THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE NAMOOS

The Distinctive Ritual Observances of the Namoos

602 648 CLUSTERED about the chain of sub-clans that makes up the clan of Mosuor biis are a number of other Namoo communities. None of them has ties of clanship with Mosuor biis; yet the latter speak of them as *ti buurət*, our stock, or *ti mabiis*, our kin. The emphasis here is on the common Mampuru origin claimed for all Namoos. It is widely known among the Tallensi that groups of people claiming to be of Mampuru origin are found scattered throughout the Northern Territories and the adjacent parts of the French Haute Volta. Though they have no political or social ties with them, Tale Namoos assert that they are of the same stock (*buurət*) as the Mossi in French territory, the Dagomba in British territory, and the various clans claiming Mampuru origin among the Gorisi, the Namnam, the Kusaasi, the Bulisi, and other neighbouring groups.

171 784 Whether or no these people reached their present locations by migration from Mampurugu, it is a fact that they all have certain ritual observances in common, and most of them keep up quasi-political or ceremonial ties with the dominant section of the Mamprusi, who share these distinctive ritual observances. In all these groups of people a man's first-born son and first-born daughter may not eat the domestic fowl, are forbidden, during their father's lifetime, to wear any of his garments or his quiver [764] and to enter or even look into his granary. Amongst all of them a man's corpse is girded with a goatskin loin-cover (*ba suona buu*) ritually decorated with three cowrie shells; and one of their most solemn oaths is to swear by 'my father and his goatskin and his three cowrie shells (*mba ni u buu ni u ligəri ata*)'—a reference to this burial custom.

184 784 These are infallible tests. A number of other ritual observances and doctrines mostly connected with mortuary and funeral ceremonies are also distinctive of Namoos. Thus, if a man is survived by his first-born son and daughter, or by either, special rites are performed to release them from the taboo on using their father's garments, weapons, and granary; and the concluding rites of a Namoo funeral are also distinctive. But these ritual observances and the notions connected with them vary in detail and nuance from clan to clan and even between segments of a single clan. Some Namoo clans and clan segments have discriminative totems similar to those of non-Namoo clans in addition to the first-born child's avoidances. They may be totems associated with the locality in which they have settled, as for instance the leopard avoidance of the people of Dkoog (Winkogo); or they may be totems symbolizing the mythical event to which the clan or lineage in question attributes its original differentiation from other like units, as, for instance, the avoidance of the crocodile (*bay*) by one major segment of Bayana yidəm at Sie. Special myths often validate these avoidances, which serve thus to distinguish a particular clan or lineage from other Namoos in Taleland.

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We have noted that Tale culture is homogeneous. Thus the totemic taboos of the Tale Namoos and their characteristic funeral rites, distinctive as they are, are homologous in form and function with the totemic observances and funeral rites of non-Namoos. We shall see the evidence for this when we examine the more elaborate differentiation of Talis and other non-Namoo clans and lineages by totemic and other ritual observances. Tallensi know this and take it for granted, as they also take for granted variations in the ritual observances of different communities which are presumed to have identical ritual forms. They attribute such variations to the influence of neighbouring communities. In fact the homologous usages of neighbouring communities have features in common which do not occur among more widely separated clans with the same practices.

But the taboos of the first-born and the goatskin loin-cover of the dead are fixed and unalterable. All Tallensi know that these are the distinguishing *kiha* (sing. *kihər*)—literally, forbidden things, but meaning ritual injunctions as well as prohibitions—of all Namoos, 'from Dagbon to Mooga', as the natives say.

Namoos say that they observe these *kiha* 'because it is the custom of our ancestors (*ti yaab yɛl nla*)'. They require no other explanation, but accept such ritual observances as facts of immemorial antiquity and part of the fixed order of society. The taboo of the fowl is the only one of these observances for which a myth of origin exists, and this is typical of the Tale myths purporting to account for the origins of totemic avoidances, being apparently trivial in content and neutral in emotional tone. Considering the fluid form and content of such myths and the fact that they are never deliberately taught, this myth is remarkably consistent in outline among Namoo clans in Taleland.[1] Tallensi display no interest in the private myths of any social group other than their own, and therefore make no secret of these myths. Knowledge of them is not deemed to be a necessary condition of adherence to the tenets they enshrine. Most young Namoos and many older men, even those who have themselves to observe the fowl taboo—an onerous enough restriction in a society whose chief sacrificial animal is the fowl—are ignorant of or but hazily acquainted with the myth. The men who know it tell it without reticence.

Significance of the Totemic Taboos of the Namoos

The fowl taboo, Namoos say, came about because 'a fowl did a great service to our ancestor'. He had a wife, and people came to her with slander of her husband, trying thus to persuade her to leave him. This made her very unhappy. But one day a broody hen sitting in the women's grinding room told her not to weep. When her husband returns from the farm she must prepare a drink of flour-water for him, said the fowl, and it would fly up and dash the calabash from his hand. If he then killed the fowl in anger the woman would know that he was a wicked man, and if he spared it she would know that people were slandering him maliciously. When the man came home, the plan was carried out. Far from injuring

[1] Different versions of the myth are found among Namoos outside Taleland, but the central theme is the same. All versions stress the point that the intervention of a fowl was responsible for the birth of the clan.

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CHAPTER VI

THE STRUCTURAL RELATIONS OF THE TALIS

A General Point

162 A NUMERICAL estimate of the Namoos in Taleland cannot be made from the published census figures. In the Tongo district alone they would include, on a rough reckoning, over a third of the population; the rest are the Talis.

● 184 The Talis, as we have seen, are distinguished by name and by myths of origin from the Namoos. Close neighbours though they are, Talis and Namoos are distinctly segregated from one another by locality, and this is associated with clear-cut structural cleavages. It is necessary, however, to emphasize that Talis and Namoos are also inseparably bound to one another by ceremonial and politico-ritual ties. In addition, all Talis and all Namoos are connected with one another as individuals by an elaborate network of cognatic and affinal ties. In the present chapter we are concerned with the constituted social relations of the Talis amongst themselves, treated in isolation from the background of their social relations with the Namoos, but this background must be borne in mind.

The Clan Structure of Zubiuŋ

X 618 The clans and lineages of the Talis form corporate units of the same kind as those of the Namoos. They are connected with one another by a network of constituted ties of the same type as those that link Namoo clans and lineages in a chain system, but more elaborately distributed and articulated. Again, the paradigm applies generally, but the perspective of each clan and lineage is peculiar to itself. To keep the parallel with the Namoos we shall take as our starting-point the group of Talis most intimately associated with Tongo, the people of Zubiuŋ (Zubiuŋdɛm).[1]

621 As we have previously mentioned, the people of Zubiuŋ live in such close contiguity with the Tongo Namoos that anyone ignorant of the structure of the community would be unable to draw a line between the homesteads of one group and those of the other. Investigation shows that Zubiuŋ homesteads form an irregular but continuous aggregate, quite distinct, spatially, from Tongo. The nearest Tongo neighbours of Zubiuŋ are the accessory Tongo lineage of Nɔŋsuur yidɛm. Consistently with the basic principles of Tale clanship, Nɔŋsuur yidɛm have an intercalary status between Tongo and Zubiuŋ. The legend which relates that the ancestor of Nɔŋsuur yidɛm was a sororal nephew (*ahɔŋ*) of Zubiuŋ is the rationalization of their intercalary role. But though they mediate between Tongo and Zubiuŋ in political matters, for example, they have no ties of clanship with the latter, as we have previously seen.

X 618 Zubiuŋ consists of three maximal lineages, residentially distributed in a way that exactly parallels their structural relations. The homesteads of

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[1] Total male members, at home and abroad, about 250.

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seizing it by violence, almost as if they were hostile intruders. *Sunzɔp* have *a priori* no need of force to assert their privileges; if they did resort to it the affront would be so grave as to rupture the ties of clanship with them. Unrelated strangers could only get one of the shares due to *sunzɔp* if they had the temerity to seize it—but they would be fortunate if they escaped with their lives, even in these days of curbed passions. The mock aggression of a joking partner is a caricature blending these contradictory ways of behaviour.

Joking partners are not obliged to tease one another. They do so spontaneously when the situation seems appropriate. People who are greatly unequal in years or status, or personally related by cognatic kinship, will not act in this way. The joking partnership merely fixes the group with whose members such behaviour is appropriate in appropriate circumstances; a casual encounter, for instance, where anybody but a joking partner or a close kinsman would be met with the customary greeting—'*ni i tooma*', lit. 'with your work'. It is also appropriate, as we have seen, in situations such as funeral ceremonies, where there is a very strict determination of attendance and behaviour by clearly defined social ties. But even there joking partners turn up largely by chance. They happen to be passing, or a few young men, hearing of the funeral and knowing that there will be dancing and girls, go for the lark of it. For distant *sunzɔp*, too, attendance at funeral ceremonies is very often a matter of chance, but it is also very often the result of a decision by responsible elders.

Such institutionalized joking partnerships do not appear to exist among the Namoos. This may be correlated with the less elaborate interlocking of constituted ties and cleavages among them than among the Talis. An analogous practice which throws light on the ideas implicit in standardized joking partnership was, however, in vogue among the several branches of Mosuor biis until recently. When there was a funeral at Yaməlag a party of relatives-in-law (*deenam*) would sometimes pass through Tongo from Wakii or Tenzugu carrying the obligatory food contributions consisting of a basket of porridge and a whole sheep or goat cut up and cooked. Tongo youths would then, if they had a chance, intercept them and compel them to give up most of the food, leaving only a small portion to prove to the Yaməlag people that their relatives-in-law had discharged their obligations. The Yaməlag people would naturally be indignant; they would denounce the Tongo youths as thieves and rascals, and upbraid their relatives-in-law for yielding so timorously. Then they would wait for an opportunity to recoup themselves in kind. Next time a similar party of relatives-in-law bound for Tongo from Naborug passed through Yaməlag they would be waylaid and robbed in the same way. It was thought of as a practical joke, and accepted as such by the victims. The annoyance it caused soon blew over and did not leave a lasting grudge, for it was understood to be an exaggerated enforcement of the rights of *sunzɔp* to a prescribed share of such contributions if they happened to turn up at the funeral.

In the same way, twenty years ago, a Tongo man who chanced to be passing through Yaməlag when the guinea corn was ripening or the

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602 ground-nuts ready for harvesting, might pluck a few twigs of guinea corn
608 or pull up a bunch of ground-nuts to stay his hunger. He would shout
x 618 out, 'Whose corn is this, yo-o-o? I am going to pluck some.' The owner, standing on his flat roof, would probably remonstrate and swear, but he would not raise a hue and cry, for this was not theft but an exaggerated assertion of clanship ties. Nowadays, since the political
[578] jealousies between the chiefs of Tongo and of Yaməlag have brought about a state of chronic hostility between the two places, this pleasant custom has fallen into disuse. It is impossible to tease people with whom one has open or suppressed enmity; it would certainly provoke a fight.
x 618 Such liberties, it is of interest to note, could never be taken with the people of Sie or Biuk, though they, too, are the clan *sunzɔp* of Tongo. For, as my informants explained, 'they are too far away, and therefore they would resent it'. On the other hand, while any Tongo man can pluck a handful of guinea corn or a bunch of ground-nuts from a clansman's field at Tongo if the two men are on good terms, no one would dare to intercept the food contribution of another Tongo section's relatives-in-law. A serious quarrel would inevitably result. 'We are too near each other, we are like the members of a single family', explained my informants. Every segment of Tongo is likely to be represented at the funeral ceremony at which these contributions from relatives-in-law are shared, to claim the share due to it. For any segment to anticipate this by violence would be a gratuitous insult implying that the other segments do not respect its rights. The people of Yaməlag and of Sie used to act in the same way towards each other before the political jealousies that to-day poison their relationship arose.

● 184 All Tallensi think alike on matters of this sort, which fall within the
x 618 ambit of their common culture, whatever their particular structural affiliations may be. This Namoo custom and its recent obsolescence fit the pattern we have established for the more conventionalized joking partnerships of the Talis.

x 618 Yet another kind of joking which I have several times witnessed
602 adds confirmation to our analysis, the more so because it is entirely
578 informal. This occurs between the members of two maximal lineages which are bound to one another by inescapable ties of politico-ritual interdependence. They are usually maximal lineages which have complementary politico-ritual offices, such as a chiefship and the tendaanaship complementary to it. A large element of tension is necessarily involved in these relationships. Mutual loyalty and solidarity in situations involving common interests are counterbalanced by mutual suspicion in matters concerning the private interests and possessions of each lineage. Behind a strong sense of amity and interdependence lurks a jealous vigilance in regard to reciprocal rights and duties.

When, therefore, representatives of the two groups meet in a ceremonial or jural situation, the more aggressive among the elders often taunt one another playfully at moments when ceremonial formality is relaxed. Gbizug and Tongo men, for example, have a habit of doing this. The Chief of Tongo and the Gbizug tendaana, on the rare occasions when they meet in public, will interrupt a long and ceremonious discussion with a

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jesting altercation about their mythologically founded bonds of mutual coercion. Ta'aŋ, the Gbizug tendaana's brother, who often deputizes for him in public ceremonies, has a sharp tongue. When representatives of the tendaana and of the Chief of Tongo have to perform some ceremony together he always pretends to mock the Namoos. 'You are only guests here,' he jeers (referring to their immigrant origin), 'I (as representative of Gbizug) have given you land to sit on, but if you don't behave I'll drive you back to Mampurugu, where you came from.' The Tongo men laugh good-humouredly at this sally, and one of them might answer, 'Very true, but if we should decide to go back to Mampurugu and leave you to yourselves, you will just starve'—the reference being to the Chief of Tongo's ritual power over the rain. Elders of Kpata'ar and Gundaat, which have a similar politico-ritual relationship to that of Tongo and Gbizug, often tease one another in the same way when they meet to perform a ceremony together.

Tallensi say this is just fun, jesting (*koohəg*); but we see again that this apparently spontaneous jesting acts as a means of reconciling and counteracting the tensions of a double-edged social relationship. Where two corporate groups are structurally divided from each other to the point of having potentially competitive interests likely to lead to conflict at one level of the social organization, but are at the same time bound to each other by strong ties of obligatory co-operation and goodwill in another aspect of their social relations, the undercurrent of hostility or mutual wariness is deflected by a jest. You jest with people who must be friendly to you in terms of one set of loyalties and may be hostile to you in terms of another, and with whom you are on an equal footing as far as mutual rights and duties go. In the social relations of individuals with one another, this configuration occurs between siblings-in-law; hence the notion that the joking relationship between corporate units is modelled on *dakiirət*, the relationship of siblings-in-law.

Privileged Moral Coercion

There is another peculiar tie belonging to the category of social relations which we have been discussing. So far as my information goes, it is also confined to the Talis and their congeners. Its moral aspect is of particular interest as a clue to the values that lie at the back of the basic principles of Talis social structure.

The natives have no name for this relationship. In virtue of it, pairs of clans or lineages usually on the margin of the field of clanship of each, but not joking partners, have the privilege of moral coercion over each other's members. The natives describe this as a taboo (*kihər*). No member of one group may refuse a request of any member of the other. 'They *dare not* refuse', one informant declared, with obvious solemnity, as if to emphasize that it was a question of deep moral values. 'If they don't give what we ask, they would die, their house (i.e. lineage) would fall to pieces (*ba yiri gbi'irme*).' In other words, if anyone violates this bond, not only he but his entire line of descent would perish—the most calamitous retribution conceivable to the natives and one which befalls only those who transgress the ultimate tenets of religion and ethics.

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clanship. But on the day of the harvest festival at Wakii, they send an offering of a fowl and flour to be added to the sacrifices which will be made at the External *Bɔɣar* of Wakii.

This pattern of ritual collaboration between the constituent segments of the clan is common in most of the other Namoo clans. Where a clan consists of one or more Namoo lineages united with one or more non-Namoo lineages, there is usually no common ritual cult, as, for example, at Zoo. The component lineages of such clans might more appropriately be considered as locally contiguous linked lineages.

Ritual collaboration in Namoo clans differs in substance though not in form from the ritual collaboration found in the clans of the Talis, as will be clearer shortly. The Namoos lack the elaborate cult of the External *Bɔɣar* associated with the Great Festivals, and most of their clans are built up round a dominant maximal lineage. In Namoo clans the cult of the founding ancestor corresponds to the cult of the *dugni bɔɣar* among the Talis—that is, the cult of the founding ancestor of a constituent maximal lineage of a composite clan. Thus, unlike the External *Bɔɣar* of the Talis, a Namoo clan *bɔɣar* is kept at the house of the segment head in whose custody it is, in the same way as the particular lineage *bɔɣar* of one of the component lineages of a Talis clan. (The *bɔɣar* itself consists of one or two small pots (*kpatarəg*) inside a shallow platter-like vessel made by chipping off the bottom half of a large pottery basin (*sar*), and covered with another piece of pottery. Like all ritual shrines, it is usually indescribably grimy with the remains of many sacrifices.)

As a general rule, ties of ritual collaboration between corporate units in Taleland always imply the existence of other structural ties. Conversely, all significant ties which define the place of a corporate unit in the whole social system tend to be mirrored in some form of ritual collaboration. This principle is of special significance for the Talis and their congeners.

Ritual Collaboration among the Talis: The External Bɔɣar and the Earth

A. *Zubiuŋ.* We have noted that the unity of a clan such as Zubiuŋ becomes explicit in the cult of their *Bɔɣar*, Duunkpaləg, the common shrine of all the ancestors of its constituent maximal lineages, and in the cult of the Earth. To sacrifice together here means to participate equally in the cults of the *Bɔɣar* and of the Earth, and is an index of the closest ties of clanship. Among the people of Zubiuŋ the synthesis of ritual collaboration with the clan structure is relatively simple, and is analogous to what is found among their Namoo neighbours. The three constituent maximal lineages are jointly and equally responsible for the custody and cult of their focal ancestor shrine, the Duunkpaləg *Bɔɣar*. It is described as an External *Bɔɣar* (*yeŋha bɔɣar*). It is 'outside' in the literal sense of being out-of-doors, in the open, and 'outside' also in the social sense of not being bound exclusively to any one of the three constituent lineages of the clan.

But each lineage, as we have previously noted, also has its *dugni bɔɣar*, 'the *bɔɣar* of the room'. (The term 'room', *dug*, implies that each maximal lineage has a segmentary relationship with the other maximal lineages similar to that of the co-ordinate segments of a single lineage.) The *dugni*

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182 794 613 fore, two intersecting fields of politico-ritual relations so adjusted that its loyalties to the other component lineages of one field are counterbalanced by its loyalties to the component lineages of the other field. Both sets of politico-ritual loyalties are correlated with the same sort of social interests, symbolized in a single system of religious concepts and values. Their organization in two complementary configurations around polar symbols checks the dangers of disruptive conflicts that might spring from them. Thus the ties of clanship are regrouped around another axis of social integration. Every maximal lineage is a bridge between a *Bɔyar* congregation and a *Tɛŋ* congregation. In most cases, in fact, the component lineages of a particular *Tɛŋ* congregation all belong to, and in that context represent, different *Bɔyar* congregations, and vice versa. This is the fundamental mechanism of the remarkable politico-ritual equilibrium found among the Talis.

The Network of Ritual Ties between Talis Clans

182 This network of public ritual ties runs through all the Talis clans. Indeed, as we have mentioned before, in the context of the cycle of the Great Festivals, it embraces both Talis and Namoos in the Tongo district, the clans of the Sie district, and a number of adjacent clans beyond the borders of Taleland. Confining ourselves to the Talis only, we find among them an organization of ritual relations analogous in pattern to the network of clanship ties. Adjacent maximal lineages have fields of ritual relations that overlap each other. They are combined thus into a single system of interwoven chains of ritual ties which spread across all the Talis. The ritual field of each maximal lineage corresponds to the parochial aspects of the *Bɔyar* and the Earth cult, the all-embracing network to their universal aspect.

X 618 794 ● 184 769 To illustrate this analysis let us take up again the chain of ritual ties that begins at Ba'ari and follow out its further extension from Gbizug to Tɛnzugu. Gbizug and Gbeog, it will be recollected, are segments of a single clan. The ritual focus of their clan unity is the supreme Earth shrine (*tɔŋgban*) at Gbizug. There the elders of the two segments are obliged to assemble for sacrifice at certain times, notably at certain phases of the Festival cycle and when the funeral ceremonies or the investiture rites of a [793] Gbizug tendaana are performed. The Gbizug tendaana and the Gbeog tendaana install each other in office. But the supreme Earth shrine at Gbizug is in the sole custody of the Gbizug tendaana. The people of Gbeog have their own focal *tɔŋgban*, the custody of which is vested in the Gbeog tendaana, and the people of Gbizug have no ritual connexion with this *tɔŋgban*. The Gbeogdem, again, also practise the cult of the External *Bɔyar* in the manner of the Hill clans. Gbizugdem have nothing to do with this cult. In fact they speak of it with contempt and hold aloof from it as if it were a perversion, even though their own clansmen practise it. 'Our ancestors did not take part in that', they say.

182 794 X 618 [778] 769 In terms of the Earth cult Gbeog comes into the field of ritual relations of Gbizug. Though it is the closest and most important, it is not the sole component segment of that field. Other adjacent maximal lineages form a part of it. Next to their supreme *tɔŋgban* the most sacred lineage shrine

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gird their dead with a sheepskin loin cover (*ba suona pɛhug*) and taboo (*kih*) the tortoise (*pakur*) and the water-tortoise (*mieŋ*)'. The people of Zubiuŋ, as we have seen, also fix upon their mortuary and funeral rites and their totemic avoidances as the two main indices of their affinity with the Talis. They add to this their special ritual relationship with the Earth, symbolized by the office of the tendaana.

Most of the Talis, it is true, gird the dead (that is, males who have begotten children before they die and are therefore considered to be socially mature) with a sheepskin; but there are a few exceptions. The people of Ka'ar use an oribi (*walɔg*) skin, and the people of Gorogo, as well as some of the Teelɔg lineages, use only a piece of string

The sheepskin has the same ritual value for the Talis as the goatskin has for the Namoos. Identical beliefs and attitudes lie behind these differences of usage, which are clearly a function of the social cleavage between Namoos and Talis. Members of either group often have great knowledge of the mythology, the ritual practices, and the distinctive beliefs and customs of the other group. They pick up this knowledge when they go on visits to their maternal kin in the other group, and the underlying identity of beliefs and values makes this easy. Yet it would be inconceivable for the people of either group deliberately to take over the usages of the other group. The assimilations of custom that have taken place have been unconscious.

Talis explain deviations from the common ritual, such as those of the people of Ka'ar or of Gorogo, by the cliché, 'Our ancestors desired it so'. Thus the Gorogo people claim that their founding ancestor originally came from the Woologa country. They still have ceremonial ties with the people of Chana, which they say was their ancestor's place of origin. They connect their custom of putting a string on a corpse with this myth, for both myth and custom distinguish them from the other Hill Talis. It is significant that the Teelɔg lineages which have the same custom have no clanship ties with Gorogo, nor is any explanation offered by either group of the common ritual usage.

The Tallensi see the binding force of any observance held by the lineage or clan as deriving from an ancestor whose edict it is said to have been. The concept *kih*, it must be remembered, is applied not only to ritual prohibitions but also to ritual injunctions. The sheepskin loin cover for the dead is also a *kihɔr*. The moral imperative of a ritual prohibition or injunction—a *kihɔr*—is connected with the dependence of the lineage on its ancestors' goodwill for its survival and welfare. And there is another point. The most sacred duty owed by son to parent or parent to child is the performance of his or her funeral ceremonies. It is unthinkable, and it has never been known, for a native to fail in this duty, though nobody can compel him to do it. This is the case in spite of the fact that funeral rites are also the concern of the whole lineage and clan. In funeral ceremonies the structure of the lineage and clan emerges into action as perhaps in no other Tale institution. And it emerges in such a way as to show up clearly how the moral responsibility of the individual to his forbears is a function of his rights and duties as a lineage member and is a factor in the cohesion of the lineage.

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Funeral rites have a twofold symbolic value for the Tallensi. They symbolize the corporate unity and identity of the lineage and clan and its ties with other clans; but they also symbolize the group's dependence on and moral responsibility to their ancestors, collectively and individually. This is shown very well in the custom of each clan's using a particular kind of loin cover for the dead and in the associated custom of swearing an oath by the father's loin cover. They show that ritual symbols of social differentiation and association among the Tallensi are not mere emblems of intergroup differences. They are emotionally charged symbols of the fact that the corporate unity and identity of the group is created by the moral bonds of its members among themselves and of each member with the ancestors of the group. We shall return to this presently.

In spite of their deviant mortuary customs, the people of Gorogo, Ka'ar, and Teelɔg consider themselves to be, and are considered to be, as much a part of the Talis aggregate as any other Talis clans. Conversely it is known among the Talis that some clans of Gɔrisi and Namnam, as well as many of the *tendaanditib* lineages of the Sie district, dress their dead in a sheepskin loin cover. The Talis do not on this account acknowledge any of these groups as Talis or as being kin to them. Again, some clans in the Sie district gird their dead with an oribi skin. But they deny having any ties with Ka'ar. Indeed, their elders are quite unaware that they have this custom in common with Ka'ar, and are not in the least interested in hearing of it. This is a significant difference between the Namoos, all of whom have the same mortuary observances, and the Talis and their congeners. This difference extends to other manifest ritual usages that serve to differentiate corporate units from one another.

Certain other funeral rites are also stressed as rigorously distinctive of the Talis and as common to all of them. All Talis, it is said, conclude a funeral by the rite of *yma ma'ala*. Members of the deceased's maximal lineage, and the heads of the other lineages of the clan, contribute a large number of fowls, which are slaughtered as a sacrifice to mark the final departure of the dead person from the social sphere of the living and his aggregation to the ancestors. In reality, almost every clan has its own modifications in the details of the rite. In some clans it is performed for all males who have begotten children, in others for lineage heads only, in others for both men and women; and the people of Kpata'ar omit the rite altogether. The rite is found also among many of the *tendaanditib* lineages of the Sie district, with diverse local variations.

Similar local variations from clan to clan appear in the other parts of the funeral ceremonies where the usages of the Talis contrast with those of the Namoos, and many, if not most, of these distinct customs are found among the *tendaanditib* of the Sie district.

These variations in ritual observances, and their correlation with structural ties and cleavages, are constantly brought to an observer's attention. They form a common topic of discussion and comment at funeral ceremonies. One is often reminded of them by the behaviour of women at these ceremonies. A woman's husband's clan very often has different ritual practices from those of her father's clan. Now, married

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daughters always come to funerals in their paternal family. They have special ritual duties, some specific to that clan, some more general. They are apt, then, to follow the procedures to which they have become accustomed in their husband's home and have, therefore, to be closely supervised.

In all these mortuary and funeral rites there is a tendency for the plainsmen to have one type of variant, while the Hill clans favour another. There is less variation in the details of rites among the clans of either group than between the two groups, and the clans at the foot of the Hills show variants of ritual usage intermediate between those of the plains Talis and of the Hill clans. Thus, one of the most solemn and sacred of the rites which transform the brute fact of death into the mystical fact of spiritual status is the rite of *kpe kpiintaŋ*. It is usually regarded as distinctive of the Namoos, but it occurs also in the funeral ceremonies of tendaanas and elders at Zubiuŋ, Ba'ari, Gbizug, and Wakii (the Talis clans contiguous with the Namoos) as well as among some of the non-Namoo clans of the Sie area. The Hill Talis attribute this to contamination by the customs of the Namoos. There are one or two rites which the plains Talis have and the Hill Talis lack altogether. There is, therefore, a broad distinction corresponding to the division between the clans that celebrate *Da'a* and those that celebrate *Boyaraam* as their Harvest Festival. But the two clusters overlap, as they do structurally, and the Talis overlap with the *tendaanditib* of the Sie area by the criterion of funeral customs as they do by those of locality and structure.

The funeral customs of the Talis, it is clear, are directly correlated with the structure of the society. The broad patterns of doctrine and ritual practice are the same for all Tallensi, and are an indication of their uniform culture and of a social structure which embraces all the Tallensi in a single system. More specific patterns of doctrine and practice are followed exclusively by the Talis and their congeners elsewhere in Taleland. They are an index of the structural differentiation of these clans from the Namoos. Some of these patterns are common to all or most of the Talis clans, and correspond therefore to the network of clanship and other structural ties linking them all to one another. Other specific patterns of funeral customs mark off lesser regions within the whole cluster of Talis clans. And finally, variations in detail correspond to the genealogical differentiation of clan from clan and lineage from lineage, and to the fact that each unit has a specific field of social relations not wholly congruent with that of any other unit of a like sort. The natives understand this. As we have noted before, they see variant ritual beliefs and practices of all kinds, and especially variant mortuary and funeral customs, as ways in which the corporate identity and the continuity of lineage and clan are expressed. They consider such variations within the limits of common patterns as belonging to the very fabric of their social organization.

Totemic Avoidances and Clanship Ties

The connexion between ritual observances and the social structure can be even more plainly seen in the totemic avoidances of the Talis and the

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other non-Namoos. It is recognized by all Tallensi that these taboos are on a par with the fowl taboo of the Namoos, though they have, in many respects, a more complex meaning. Among both groups of clans, no doubt because totemic taboos are so clear-cut and categorical, it is considered unthinkable for an adult in full command of his faculties to violate (*galɔm*) a totemic taboo deliberately. The sanctions for an accidental breach are the same in both groups, but this is an extremely rare occurrence. It is enough to see the spontaneous repugnance of small children to unaccustomed or forbidden food to understand why they keep totemic taboos so conscientiously. A man never allows a prohibited animal into his house; and women married to men who may eat animals forbidden to themselves take scrupulous care to avoid a possible lapse. His totemic taboos appear to the individual as a simple, unequivocal moral precept.

Talis state their totemic avoidances in the form: 'We do not eat (*ti pu ɔbɔt*) or we taboo (*kih*) such and such an animal', meaning a particular species of animal. They explain that these avoidances are obligatory on a person through the fact of his being born a member of a certain maximal lineage; they are obligatory on both men and women from birth to death. Hence the wives of Talis have to refrain from eating animals prohibited to their husbands, though not to their own maximal lineages, when they have infants at the breast, or, in some clans, throughout their child-bearing period. For, as the natives explain, 'Food changes into milk', and the infant would be committing a sin indirectly. This problem does not arise amongst the Namoos, since all Tale women avoid eating the domestic fowl from the beginning of pubescence onwards. It is one of several food taboos observed by women with the utmost strictness, not for ritual reasons but purely as a matter of feminine propriety.

As with the Namoos, Talis totems and the totems of their congeners in the Sie area, are mythically validated, as we shall see presently. But like Namoos, Talis never express awe or reverence for a clan or lineage totem animal. It is an ordinary, commonplace creature devoid of anything in the nature of a halo of sacredness. They do not, for example, call a totem a sacred object (*bayɔr*). The emphasis is on the avoidance, the act of conduct as such. There is a notion of moral obligation in keeping the avoidance, but it is directed, as we shall see, to the ancestors and not to the totem animal in its own right.

Talis are not forbidden to kill an animal which is their totemic avoidance, though they would not wantonly do so. They may, and often do, catch these animals alive and sell them to people who are permitted to eat them; for many of these totem animals are considered to be great delicacies.

In one respect, however, the totemic avoidances of the Talis and their congeners differ from the fowl taboo of the Namoos. The former swear an oath by their totems, whereas the Namoos never invoke the fowl in this way. Like the Namoos, Talis can swear by the loin cover they put on their dead. The formula is the same as for the Namoos, with the substitution of the name of the animal whose skin is used: 'By my father and his sheep (or oribi) and his three cowrie shells.' This is a solemn oath, uttered in response to a serious accusation, in proof of one's innocence,

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627 I was told. I have never heard it used by anybody, and this itself shows
●184 how seriously it is taken.
X618 The oath by the totem is not quite so serious a matter, though it could not be uttered with impunity. The formula is: '*Pakur ni nnuoni*—the tortoise and inside my mouth', if the totemic animal is the tortoise, or, in free translation: 'By the tortoise which I may not eat.' This oath might be used in trivial circumstances. Thus, if a man were wrongly accused of adultery he might swear by his father. But if he were accused of having appropriated something belonging to a friend or relative without permission, though admittedly without intending to steal it, he would swear to his innocence with an oath by his totem. It is the sort of oath, too, informants said, that one might use to assert one's truthfulness in an argument. A person who swears falsely by his totem would decline in health and begin to waste away (*burəm*), but he could probably be saved by atoning sacrifices. A person who swears one of the greater oaths, including the oath by one's father, falsely, will probably die. That is how the natives distinguish the degrees of sacredness they attach to these oaths. Again, I have never heard a totemic oath used, but I have discussed the matter with many people, both young and old, and their views are unanimous. Tallensi are reluctant to swear an oath except in an issue of real importance, and then they resort to the most solemn oath that is appropriate in the situation.

784 There is nothing secret about these totemic avoidances. Knowledge of them is public and widespread, though not always accurate where the totems of other clans than one's own are concerned. People become acquainted with the totemic avoidances of other clans through their ties of extra-clan kinship, and women spread the knowledge of the totemic avoidances of their paternal clans among the clans into which they marry. An amusing instance of the way in which this knowledge spreads occurred with one of my own boys. He was a Namoo, and one day bought a live water-tortoise from a Tenzugu youth. This is a great delicacy, but, as he told me afterwards, the cooking of it cost him almost more trouble than it was worth. For he had to cook it himself, out of doors in a borrowed pot, because his wife, a Tenzugu woman, was prohibited from eating this animal and refused to let him contaminate her kitchen or her cooking utensils with it.

It is never necessary for Tallensi to ask one another what their totemic avoidances are. When a person is required, for ritual reasons, to observe the taboos of another clan, the people of that clan who come to perform the rites that impose these taboos on him tell him about them. But one can ask a person, 'What do you (i.e. such and such a clan or lineage) taboo? (*ya kiha lani*)', or, 'What do you swear by? (*ya pɔta lani*)', in order to ascertain a group's totemic avoidances.

784 The animals most widely avoided among the Talis are the tortoise
184 (*pakur*) and the water tortoise (*mieŋ*). Zubiun, Gbizug, and most of the
X618 Hill clans taboo both these animals. But there are several exceptions. None of the clans on the Degal side of the Hills keep these avoidances, nor do the people of Tamboog, and only the senior maximal lineage of the three constituent lineages of Soog has them. The people of Degal,

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for example, avoid the squirrel (*sinzɪrəg*); the Tamboog people do not eat the dog (*baa*), the leopard (*yeogbaa*), the monkey (*ymaaŋ*), and the hare (*suoŋ*).

The majority of the clans which observe the two characteristic avoidances of the Talis have additional discriminatory totems. Zubiuŋ has the cat (*sakoo*); at Wakii it is the snake (*waaf*), and this includes all species of snake, even the innocent little green *bɪnɪrəg* which children of other clans kill and eat. A whole group of clans, including all that part of the network of linked lineages that connects Bunkiuk, Yinduur, Sii, and Gorogo, taboo the snake and the crocodile (*baŋ*) in addition to the land and water tortoises. Among these clans a snake that injures a domestic animal or a person is killed without hesitation, and if it is of an edible species, such as the python (*wayakpɛm*), it will be given to a friend or kinsman of a neighbouring clan which does not taboo snakes. This rule applies to all species of dangerous animals that serve as totems to a clan. If they injure mankind, or man's property, they are transgressing (*galəm*) and deserve to be killed. This does not mean, however, that the Tallensi conceive of a special tie of friendship or kinship between a clan and its totem animals. But we shall come back to this point later.

Ba'ari and Yayazuor, with the exception of one accessory lineage, do not fall into the same circle of totemic avoidances. Their taboos vary from one maximal lineage to another. Thus, Ba'at-Sakpar taboos the dog and the hare; but Lakum yiri has no totemic avoidances.

When a clan or lineage has several totemic avoidances they are all considered to be of equal importance. In some situations the totems common to several clans are stressed, in others the natives draw attention to those which differentiate units among a number that have some common totems. There is no precise correlation between the ties of clanship and the distribution of totemic avoidances. Tamboog and Gundaat, closely allied as they are by ties of clanship, have different totemic avoidances. The constituent maximal lineages of clans like Soog and Ba'ari have no common totems, nor have the linked *lineages of Zubiuŋ* and Ba'ari, or Soog and Sakpee. Conversely, common totemic avoidances do not by themselves indicate the existence of clanship ties. Ba'at-Sakpar has no clanship ties with Tamboog, though both taboo the dog and the hare, and the avoidance of the Degal people is found also among some clans of the Sie area which have no ties of clanship with Degal. It follows from this that (as among the Namoos) common totemic prohibitions are not a bar to marriage; lineage and clan exogamy operate in terms of clanship ties only.

On the other hand, clanship ties are in some instances associated with totemic avoidances. Dun biis of Ba'ari are said to observe the same avoidances as the Hill Talis, because they have clanship ties with Samiit. Alaa biis of Dkoog have the totemic taboos of Wakii, as well as those of Dkoog proper (a Namoo clan), because of their clanship ties with Wakii. Both these are attached lineages, whose descent is attributed to a son of a clan sister who had been married to a Samiit and a Wakii man respectively and had subsequently been divorced and sent back home with her children. The two lineages thus preserve the avoidances of what would

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have been their founding ancestors' paternal clans. In other cases the correlation is not so clear, since the attached lineages concerned are intercalary between clans that have the same avoidances. But it is not a general rule that attached lineages preserve the avoidances of the clan of the alleged father of their founding ancestor, as can be seen from the case of Ba'at-Lakum yidem, who do not keep the Zubiun taboos.

Thus Talis sometimes cite common totemic and other ritual observances as a sign of clanship ties, and at other times deny any necessary connexion between ritual observances and clanship ties. When they want to emphasize the close interdependence, or the sense of community of a particular group of clans, by contrast with other Talis or non-Talis clans, they tend to pick on common ritual observances in proof of this. But on the other hand, they are equally ready to quote peculiar totemic taboos as signs of the genealogical or social singularity of a clan or lineage. The apparent inconsistency does not worry them. For, as we have seen, Tallensi cannot visualize precisely the structure of their society in its entirety, and there is good evidence for both views in the ritual observances of the Talis. There is a tendency for some clans that are closely interconnected to have some totems in common, and for others to have different totems.

The totemic avoidances found among the clans of the Sie district in general follow the pattern found at Ba'ari; but in this area there is no close-knit nuclear aggregate of clans like the Hill Talis. The relative autonomy of the maximal lineage stands out more markedly, and there is consequently a greater diversity of totemic avoidances.

Totemic Myths

We have previously remarked that Namoos show little interest in the mythology of their totemic taboos. This attitude is characteristic of all Tallensi. Talis elders, whose authority and wisdom in ritual matters were widely respected, and who willingly gave me information of the most secret kind, were content to dismiss the question of the origin of their totemic taboos with some trite remark such as, 'We grew up to find it thus'. But here and there one comes across a myth accounting for the origin of a totemic taboo, especially in the Sie area. They are all expansions of the text 'The animal conferred a benefit on our ancestor (*u daa maal ti yaab la*)'. Though they all have the same moral, they vary greatly in substance.

Thus, according to one version, the avoidance of the tortoise and water-tortoise among the Hill Talis began in this way: 'Our (anonymous) ancestor' was suffering severely from thirst once and could find no water. He saw a tortoise crawling along and followed it. The animal reached a heap of dry leaves, which it scratched aside revealing a spring. Thereupon 'our ancestor' vowed that never again would he or his descendants eat the tortoise; and as the water-tortoise is merely another species of the same family, this taboo naturally extends to it as well.

According to another version, which is worth quoting as an example of the variations in these myths, 'our ancestor' was on a journey and was

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basis, for instance, of their technique of divination, which depends on rapid and spontaneous inference from stereotyped signs and symbols.

These myths provide yet another illustration of the indifference of the Tallensi to the origins of their customs. The emphasis in their culture is on conduct, not on creed; on performance rather than on doctrine. At the same time, these myths express, as we have previously noted, the basic postulate of Tale philosophy—that the ancestors are the *fons et origo* of their whole social order—and they show also how the natives visualize their totemic taboos as symbols of the moral and ritual bonds imposed by agnatic descent.

The Totemic Avoidances of the Talis as a Reflex of the Social Structure

We can now resume our analysis of the relationship of Talis ritual observances to the social structure. We have considered certain funeral rites and totemic avoidances as the chief indices of structural differentiation. We have seen that they are not, as the natives sometimes imply, hard-and-fast criteria. They mark off the Talis cluster from the Namoos in a broad way, but reflect the overlapping between them which our study of the clanship system has brought out. And among the Talis themselves, though there is a considerable congruence between genealogical grouping as determined by the canon of agnatic descent and distinctive ritual observances, it is not a one-to-one relationship.

The funeral customs and totemic taboos we have reviewed have one feature in common which helps to explain why the natives think of them as indices of social differentiation. They are tied to the agnatic line, passed on from father to child just like membership of the lineage. They owe their binding force to the fact that they were, according to native belief, instituted by the ancestors of the lineage or clan. Hence arises a significant common element, the oath associated with the observance. Breach of the ritual observance or using the oath falsely is blasphemy against the ancestors.

We pick up this thread again in another sphere of the ritual system of the Talis. It is a common opinion in Taleland that the taboos against eating the tortoise and water-tortoise are specially characteristic of the Hill Talis. And the reason always given for this is that these taboos are connected with the Talis cult of the External *Bɔyar*. Among the Hill Talis, if a child transgresses the taboo (*galɔm hihɔr*) by eating of the forbidden animal, its father 'pays' (*yɔ*) a fowl to the External *Bɔyar* of which his clan is an adherent. The fowl is sacrificed at the *Bɔyar*, with apologies for the transgression and pleas for the child's future well-being. A fine is thus paid to annul the trespass, and the smallness of the fine is evidence that the trespass is not considered serious.

As a rule, the group of clans and maximal lineages forming the congregation of a particular External *Bɔyar* all have the same avoidances. Thus, all the units that owe ritual allegiance to Bona'ab, the External *Bɔyar* of Kpata'ar and its associated lineages, taboo the tortoise and the water-tortoise. Hence, individuals who are the spiritual wards of Bona'ab may not eat these animals, and, if they belong to other clans or other

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tribes with different taboos, they must observe these in addition to the taboos of their own clan. One segment of Samiit, which also belongs to this congregation, is prohibited in addition from eating the snake, so a supplicant coming to the *Bɔyar* sponsored by Samiit must refrain also from eating the snake. Wannii, another well-known External *Bɔyar* in the Hills, includes in its congregation only clans and lineages which taboo the snake and crocodile as well as the tortoise and water-tortoise. Hence, children of strangers who are the spiritual wards of this *Bɔyar* must avoid all four animals. Clans and lineages that have atypical totems also have independent External *Bɔya*.

Among the Hill Talis, then (and this applies also to the people of Zubiuŋ and Gbeog), common totems generally indicate membership of the same External *Bɔyar* congregation. This means that the clans and lineages concerned are subject to common ritual sanctions in terms of the ancestor cult, embodied in common cult objects and ceremonies. It implies obligatory bonds of amity and interdependence on the politico-ritual plane, prohibiting recourse to arms, for example, as a means of redressing wrongs between member lineages of the same congregation, or acts of hostility such as the abduction of a fellow member's wife, though he may not be a kinsman. It implies formal duties of member lineage to member lineage in funeral ceremonies; and it creates a feeling of belonging together, of spontaneous goodwill towards one another, among the member lineages, which even the bitter political dissensions of to-day have not altogether destroyed. Belonging to the same religious community in itself connotes social ties analogous to those of clanship.

The *Bɔyar* cult resembles other forms of ritual observance tied to the notion of descent in that there is an oath associated with it. It emphasizes the key idea of the cult, the dominance of the collective ancestors, as we shall see shortly. For that matter, this idea is the main theme of all the rites and doctrines of the cult—the initiation of youths by 'handing them over to their ancestors' as the Talis put it; the Harvest and Sowing Festivals; and no less in such minor things as entrusting a recalcitrant wife, the source of future descendants, to the *Bɔyar* or the coercion of an adulterous wife by means of it.

But before we deal with these points, an aspect of the *Bɔyar* cult to which we have previously referred must be further discussed. An External *Bɔyar* can become the spirit-guardian (*sɛyər*) of an individual. An ancestor spirit who becomes a person's spirit-guardian is defined in native religious doctrine as 'He who has my life in his keeping so that I exist (*ɔn m-mar n-govor ka mbɛ*)', and the ward (*sɛyəraan*) must keep the totemic avoidances of the *Bɔyar* community. This applies particularly to non-Talis (Mamprusi, Dagomba, Bulisi, and others) who come as pilgrims to the *Bɔyar* to supplicate for children. The special bonds of ritual dependence thus created include both the parents and the children born, as the natives believe, in answer to their prayers. The Hill Talis themselves keep the avoidances whether or not they are personally the wards of the *Bɔyar*; for, as they put it, they are all *ipso facto* under its spiritual guardianship.

If a stranger pilgrim has a child in answer to his prayers, his first duty

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776 is to pay over the gifts and sacrifices he has promised the *Bɔyar* in return.
788 Later, when the child is old enough to travel, it is brought to the *Bɔyar* to be ritually dedicated to it and named, and thus brought into communion with it. Wards of the *Bɔyar* have prescribed names according to [551] their order of birth. First-borns are always Tɔŋ or Bɔyare; later children have names compounded of these two names and suffixes indicative of sex or birth order—Tɔndoog or Tɔnpɔk or Tanzoo, and so forth. A girl [582] ward must remain chaste until she marries; and when she is given in marriage she has to be released from this bond by means of gifts and sacrifices to the *Bɔyar* before she goes to her husband.

769 The ritual dominion of the Hill Talis' External *Bɔya* extends, also, to
648 whole clans and lineages of non-Tale tribes as we shall see later. Here
574 it is enough to mention that every External *Bɔyar* of the Hill Talis has a traditional network of client lineages and clans among the adjacent non-Tale tribes, the Mamprusi, Dagomba, Bulisi, Woolisi, and even Mossi; and nowadays also in Ashanti and the Colony. Every year, at the time of the Harvest Festivals, these client lineages send messengers with gifts and sacrifices to the *Bɔyar* to which they adhere, to give thanks for the benefits of the past year and to pray for good crops, good health, peace, and offspring during the coming year. Client lineages also observe the totemic and other ritual rules of the *Bɔyar*. From time to time reciprocal visits are paid to the client lineages by representatives of the Hill Talis [609] lineages that sponsor them before the *Bɔyar*. These visitors, coming as emissaries of the *Bɔyar*, are received with the hospitality due to honoured kinsmen and travel long distances in hostile country under the safe conduct of their client associates without danger. It is chiefly from its client lineages that pilgrims come to a particular *Bɔyar*.

784 The personal totemic avoidances of wards of a Talis *Bɔyar* are instances
776 of a more general rule. It often happens that a child's spirit-guardian is a
●184 matrilateral ancestor or ancestress, its father's maternal grandfather, for instance. Then the ward (*sɛyɔraan*) is obliged to observe the totemic avoidances which were held by his spirit-guardian during the latter's lifetime. He must do so, according to native doctrine, because he will have to offer sacrifices throughout his lifetime to his spirit-guardian; and as a sacrifice is an act of communion, both between the living, and between the living and the dead, he would be unable either to offer or to partake of sacrifices to his spirit-guardian if he did not keep the latter's taboos. Thus he would nullify the bond of mystical tutelage and lay himself open to inevitable disasters. He would also gravely damage his relations with the agnatic descendants of his spirit-guardian, upon whom falls the duty of maintaining the cult of the latter's spirit and whom he will sometimes have to join in sacrifice. There are many people among the Namoos who observe Talis taboos for this reason, and many Talis who avoid both the totems of their own clan and those of other clans as well. The fowl taboo of the Namoos is an exception to this rule, for the obvious reason that it is restricted to first-born children. Even if a man had to avoid the fowl in his lifetime, it ceases to be relevant after his death, and is no longer remembered by his descendants. But the rule does apply to the ancillary totems of those Namoo clans and lineages that have any, such as the

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leopard taboo of Dkoog; for these taboos are of the same class as those of the Talis.

An individual's avoidance of his matrilateral spirit-guardian's totems is, of course, an avoidance of the totems of the latter's lineage. They are the people who have the custody of the shrine at which sacrifices must be offered to the *sɛyər* spirit; their mediation is essential for a correct relationship between ward and spirit-guardian. It is with them, the living members of the spirit-guardian's lineage, that the ward shares the communion of sacrifice, and this is the fundamental condition for preserving the mystical goodwill of the *sɛyər*. On the same principle, a person given as ward to a Talis *Bɔyar* would be precluded from sacrificing to the *sɛyər*, that is from sharing in the communion of sacrifice with the members of the *Bɔyar* congregation through whom alone ritual access can be gained to the *Bɔyar*, if he does not observe their totemic avoidances. This is the symbol of the unique religious and moral bond between them. There are other ways, too, in which a matrilateral ancestor can be endowed with direct and permanent ritual efficacy for a man. Such a spirit may become (*naam*) his divining spirit (*bakologo*) or his Destiny (*yin*). Then he will have to call upon this ancestor's agnatic descendants to come and consecrate a shrine to the spirit at his house. He will have to sacrifice to this spirit and share the communion of sacrifice with the spirit's agnatic descendants. Therefore, he, too, must respect the totems of this matrilateral ancestor's lineage.

We see, therefore, that an individual can have private totemic observances not shared by other members of his lineage or clan. Like clan totems, however, they become obligatory on him in virtue of a particular tie of descent. Superficially, they can be understood as emblems of this tie and of the living kinship ties that flow from it. But there is more to it than this, as we see from the totemic bond between stranger wards of an External *Bɔyar* and the *Bɔyar* congregation.

The stranger ward and his parents are not kinsmen of the lineage that sponsors them. But they do acquire a relationship of what might be called quasi-kinship with their sponsors and a ritual bond with the *Bɔyar* which carries social duties and religious obligations equivalent to those of adherents by descent of the *Bɔyar*. These relationships are based on the fact that stranger pilgrims establish a line of descent through the mystical aid of the *Bɔyar*. It is, as the natives put it, 'because it is on his (the *Bɔyar's*) account that we have begotten children'.

Similarly, the association of totemic and other ritual observances with lineage and clanship groupings is seen to have a wider significance when the client lineages of Hill Talis *Bɔya* are brought into the picture. The ties between client lineages and the true member lineages of the *Bɔyar* to which they owe ritual allegiance may be called quasi-clanship, to sum up the native interpretation of the relationship in one word.

Totemic Taboos and the Patrilineal Principle

We have endeavoured to keep the information adduced in the preceding pages down to the minimum necessary for our argument. It is enough, however, to justify the conclusion that the ritual observances we have

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to the husband's own ancestors, but to all the ancestors, for the whole social order is based on the continuity of the patrilineal line.

One reason why the totemic taboos of the Hill Talis 'belong together' with the cult of the External *Bɔyar* is because all Tale ritual institutions tie up with the ancestor cult; for Tale ritual ideas and values are, as we have several times emphasized, a reflex of the social structure and this rests on a genealogical basis. But the connexion can be seen in more precise terms. Membership of the lineage, which means adherence to the norms of lineage relations symbolized in the totemic taboos, is a prerequisite for membership of the clan and for admission to the *Bɔyar* cult. Just as the constitution of the *Bɔyar* congregation embraces and rests upon the lineage and clan, so the ritual values and observances of the *Bɔyar* cult draw the ritual symbols of lineage identity and continuity into their orbit. The External *Bɔyar* is a transposition of the lineage *bɔyar* to a higher level of social integration; allegiance to the External *Bɔyar* is an extension, on this higher level, of the bond with the lineage *bɔyar*. In terms of ritual observances, admission to the covenant of the External *Bɔyar* presupposes observance of certain totemic taboos. And this mutual implication is strengthened by the fact that every male of a Talis lineage is bound to become a member of the *Bɔyar* cult. Lineage, clan, and *Bɔyar* congregation represent three interconnected levels of social relations and the ritual observances that correspond to them. The simplest level of this field system implies the existence of the most complex which in turn presupposes the existence of the simplest.

It is a point of significance that women, though bound by the totemic taboos as members of the lineage, are not admitted to the cult of the External *Bɔyar*. This is not only because the cult of the ancestors is the exclusive province of men. Women marry out of the lineage; they do not pass on to their children physical or social membership of it; they do not perpetuate the lineage. It is the men who maintain and perpetuate the corporate unity and continuity of the lineage; and it is on these that both the clan structure and the *Bɔyar* cult rest. It is the men who both keep the lineage going as a social entity symbolized in its totemic taboos, and maintain the social order of which the External *Bɔyar* is the pivot.

In sum, then, the totem[illegible]nds for the relative autonomy of the maximal lineage, the External *Bɔya*[illegible] for the interdependence of lineages in a single religious community; and the two ritual principles fuse owing to the fact that this ideological community is constituted by the knitting together of maximal lineages in local clusters. At the geographical centre of the ideological community, the summit of the Tong Hills, the fusion is most complete. The avoidance of the tortoise and the water-tortoise is shared by all the clans of the centre, and is felt by all the Talis to symbolize particularly membership of the ideological community as well as the narrower allegiance to the lineage. But some clans and lineages at the centre have additional or exceptional totems; and the farther we move from the centre towards Gbizug and Ba'ari out of the region of the External *Bɔyar* cult as practised by the Hill Talis, the more conspicuous do these extra avoidances become. Maximal lineages and clans which have

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extra or exceptional avoidances usually consider them to be more distinctive of themselves, though not more important, than the general taboos. In other words, these avoidances emphasize the relative autonomy of the maximal lineage in opposition to the coherence of the ideological community; and this is the more conspicuous the farther away from the centre a clan is located.

It is significant, however, that clans with additional or exceptional totems are not considered to be the less Talis for that reason. The people of Degal, for instance, who belong to the central cluster of Hill Talis, claim to be 'Talɔŋ' *par excellence* in virtue of their supposed descent from the primordial, earth-begotten tendaana of the Hills. It is a question of degree, the primacy of lineage membership being relatively stressed in the totemic avoidances of the deviant clans, the interdependence of corporate units in the greater aggregate being relatively stressed by most other Talis. From the point of view of the Hill Talis, there are, as we have learnt, two levels of interdependence amongst the Talis. There is the interdependence of the Hill clans *inter se*, focused in the External *Bɔyar* cult, which extends as far as Zubiuŋ; and there is the interdependence of all the Talis—and in fact of Talis and Namoos—in the wider politico-ritual synthesis which emerges most conspicuously in the cycle of the Great Festivals. The clans associated in the narrower synthesis all tend to have the tortoise and the water-tortoise taboos; the clans associated only in the wider synthesis tend to have taboos stressing their genealogical autonomy; Zubiuŋ and Gbizug, which form the transition region, as it were, between the narrow association and the wide association, observe the tortoise and water-tortoise taboos, but do not consider them to be as distinctive of themselves as their special avoidances.

But this, we must not forget, is not the whole story. Totemic taboos, funeral rites, and *Bɔyar* ritual are symbols. What they symbolize is the body of moral and ritual norms correlated to each of the three zones of social relations we have been considering—the norms which are the organizing values of lineage, clan, and ritual community. As these rest, in the final count, on the mystical supremacy of the ancestor spirits, we can say summarily that these ritual observances symbolize the ancestors in the various aspects under which they govern social and individual life among the Talis.

The Significance of Animals as Totems

The totemic avoidances of the Tallensi all refer to animals, and it may well be asked if they have any common characteristics or outstanding peculiarities from the native point of view. Totemic avoidances of the type we have recorded are found throughout Voltaic culture; in fact, they are a notable feature of social organization among all the negroid peoples of the western Sudan. Not only is their pattern the same throughout this region, but the animal species most commonly prohibited are the same, and the myths accounting for the taboos have the same form.[1] To

[1] Cf. for example, the reference to the *Tne* among the Bambara, in Monteil, Charles, op. cit. 134–5.

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This mystical power is focused for a particular social group in the Earth shrines of their own settlement—that is why the Earth animals are not sacred in the bush. And the ritual efficacy of the Earth at a particular place depends on its connexion with a particular social group holding the office of tɛndaana for that place. The animals therefore symbolize the moral relations of men, as these are determined by their social ties with particular tracts of the earth. They symbolize the function of locality in Tale social organization.

One logical element in this symbolism is obvious. The mystical 'livingness' of the Earth is symbolized in the living creatures it harbours. But this is not all, for otherwise other earth-dwelling creatures might have been selected as well.

The special relationship of the sacred Earth animals with the clan holding the tɛndaanaship for the area is focused in one species, as a rule. Thus the python is specially sacred at Gbizug, the crocodile at Zubiuŋ. To kill one of these animals at home is almost as bad as murder. For they are more than Earth taboos; they are 'ancestors' (*yaab*, pl. *yaanam*) to the group concerned. If found dead in the settlement, they are given a token funeral. The sacred crocodiles living in the Zubiuŋ water-hole are treated with an almost human familiarity. 'They are our ancestors, they would not injure us', the people say. In some clans carnivores like the leopard or the lion have this function, but are not considered Earth taboos. The natives say that their ancestors who have held politico-ritual office 'rise up again (*ihigərəme*)' after death as these animals. Tallensi deny that this is a belief in reincarnation or in the transmigration of souls. These taboos have attributes of totems, of Earth taboos, and of personal ancestor symbols; and the common thread is the notion of the ancestors as a living mystical force, symbolized in living creatures. The animals symbolize the immortality of the ancestors, that is, their efficacy and power in the life of their descendants. The ancestors are where their descendants are. One reason why the lineage is tied to its locality is because the ancestors are tied to it. They are spiritually present in the social life of their descendants in the same way as the sacred animals are present in sacred pools or in the locality with which the group is identified.

Functional Differentiation and its Symbolism

An important inference emerges from our argument. Lineage and locality are interwoven and interdependent factors of Tale social structure. But they are functionally discrete factors. We have previously seen how their interdependence is reflected in Tale religious ideology. We see now that their functional discreteness within the pattern of interdependence is also expressed in ritual symbols. The formally similar and associated but functionally distinct symbols we have discussed bring this out.

Tale society is highly homogeneous and integrated. But this is a resultant of the balanced interplay of a number of functionally discrete factors and of the inter-articulation of many clearly defined social units. Tale religion gives ritual expression and sanction to these principles.

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618 [608] one another in funerals and similar ceremonial events. These ceremonial reciprocities do not prevail between Tongo or Zoo and any of the Hill Talis clans adjacent to them.

621 184 Nevertheless, a palpable social boundary still prevails between Tongo and Zubiuŋ, but one far less determinate than that between Tongo and its other Talis neighbours. No Zubiuŋ homesteads are so situated as to be surrounded on all sides by Tongo homesteads, and vice versa; there is no indiscriminate mingling of the homesteads of the two clans. Looked at from within, both Zubiuŋ and Tongo are self-contained spatial units within their respective social circumferences. This is correlated with their contrasting totemic observances, clan cults, and politico-ritual offices; their mutual exclusiveness by the canon of agnatic descent and the liberty to intermarry that goes with this; and their consequent divergent jural interests as distinct corporate units; the people of Tongo are Namoos, the Zubiuŋdem Talis. The observer is constantly apprised of this in the attitudes and opinions of individuals, in economic activities, and in jural and ritual events, the very activities and events which reveal the close bonds of the two groups. Tongo people never scrupled to raid their weaker Zubiuŋ neighbours for cattle owed to them, as many old men relate from personal experience. On the other hand, responsible elders and chiefs of Tongo, in those days, disapproved strongly of resort to violent self-help against Zubiuŋ by their people, though they could not always prevent it—an attitude they would never adopt in regard to the other Talis. To-day Tongo and Zubiuŋ people regard one another with a certain amount of suspicion and good-natured superiority, tempered with a tolerance which the former never show towards the other Talis.

621 184 166 A similar, but more elastic, social boundary exists between Tongo and Zoo. There are no Zoo people living inside Tongo, but no less than 11 of the 39 homesteads situated on the land under the ritual jurisdiction of Zoo-Yiraaŋ, within the social circumference of Zoo, are the homes of permanent immigrants from Tongo. The bond of common stock (*buarət*) between these two locally allied and politically associated Namoo clans blurs the cleavages between them. Tongo people find it the more congenial to live amongst Zoo people in considerable numbers because they have the same ritual observances, mortuary and funeral customs, and politico-ritual offices and values. It is mainly cultural differences of this kind that deter them from settling amongst the people of Zubiuŋ.

The one-sided filtration of Tongo people into Zoo, and the absence of the reverse process, are due mainly to the density of habitation—which is so great as to preclude immigration—and the obvious excess of population at Tongo. Zoo people who wish to emigrate, temporarily or permanently, move farther afield, to Gbambee or Biuŋ. In any case, the flow of migration from Tongo to Zoo has apparently reached saturation, for it has now practically stopped. But this movement, though at bottom an ecological readjustment, has been canalized by the social structure; and while it brings out the affinities of Tongo with Zoo, it also emphasizes their separateness. Because they are structurally independent of each other, Tongo people only migrate to Zoo if they have matrilateral kin there who will grant them land to build on and farm. By contrast,

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621 people from Tongo and Zoo settle at Gbambee, which is only an overflow
166 settlement, irrespective of kinship or lineage relationships, usually on land
184 formerly utilized by their forefathers as bush farms.

Elastic as it is, the social boundary between Tongo and Zoo has not
621 disappeared. This is shown in the effort made by the people of Zoo,
182 during the past two generations, to resist being swallowed up politically
178 by Tongo. To preserve the autonomous status of the chiefship of Biuŋ, which is vested in the Zoo Namoos, the chiefs of Biuŋ now reside there permanently instead of at Zoo, as in former times. It is evident, also, from the recognition by leading men of both groups, that they are now more closely united than in the days of their fathers. They describe this as part of the general trend towards wider political consolidation, both within clans and between neighbouring communities, 'since the white man tamed us (*nasaara m-maa ti*)'. They commonly quote a trivial but telling sign of this. Nowadays one often finds a group of Zoo boys pasturing their cattle side by side with a group of young cattle herds from Tongo, and playing amicably with them. 'When I was a boy', a Zoo elder
[578] said, 'this never happened. The Tongo children were strangers to us, and our fathers used to warn us not to go near them, for we always used to fight and that would cause bad blood.'

621 Between Tongo and Gbeog dwells the numerically small (they number under fifty males) but socially powerful maximal lineage of Gbizug. A social boundary, intermediate in character between that which separates Tongo from Zubiuŋ and that which demarcates it from the Hill Talis, runs between it and Gbizug. They are more distinctly separated, territorially, than Tongo and Zubiuŋ, yet so closely contiguous that constant friendly intercourse and mutual assistance is a regular feature of the relations of members of the two units with one another. At the same time, the cleavage in terms of descent, ritual observances, and jural interests goes deeper than with Zubiuŋ. Gbizug is closely allied to the Hill Talis and Ba'ari by ties of clanship, politico-ritual collaboration, and common ritual values. It is also bound to Tongo by inescapable ties of politico-ritual interdependence and mutual constraint. This accentuates the social boundary between them. The politico-ritual function of Gbizug is to hold the balance between Tongo and the Hill Talis. It stands aloof in their disputes, taking neither side, for it belongs equally to both and wholly to neither. Thus, important ceremonial events at Gbizug are attended both by representatives of Tongo and by representatives of the adjacent Hill Talis clans and Ba'ari, though the former take a more distant, passive, and extraneous part in them than the latter.

621 We have mentioned Gbambee, a settlement of about 25 to 30 home-
166 steads straggling over a row of stony hillocks alongside a great stretch of
167 low-lying bush, most of it uncultivable, which lies just beyond Zoo. This is regarded as merely an outpost of Tongo and Zoo, where the younger men, who are most handicapped by the scarcity of land at home, can find an economic outlet. Hence a man may live there for many years, grow old and die there, but he is generally brought back to Tongo or Zoo for burial among his ancestors. There are many indications, however, that Gbambee will soon become stabilized as a permanent settlement.

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These offices are either chiefship (*na'am*) (or its equivalent, the senior office connected with an External *Bɔyar*) or tɛndaanaship.[1] Chiefship is primarily associated with the Namoos, though not exclusively so, tɛndaanaship with the clans and maximal lineages claiming to be the autochthonous inhabitants of the country, though, again, not exclusively so. Both chiefship and tɛndaanaship are, to the natives, unitary institutions made up of offices distributed among a number of clans and lineages. The range of these institutions is not even limited to Taleland. All chiefs are 'brothers' since they derive their office from a common source, the Paramount Chief of Mampurugu; all tɛndaanas, similarly, are 'brothers' since their office has the same function and ritual value everywhere in relation to the Earth. The chain of ritual collaboration is one expression of this notion.

Among the Tale chiefs (*na'ab*, pl. *nadɛm*) the Chief of Tongo (*Tɔŋraana*) ranks highest. He has no political, administrative, or judicial authority over any other chiefs, or any other clan than his own, but his office incarnates the quintessence of *na'am*. He represents all the chiefs of the country in the ritual attributes of chiefship. Tɛndaanas, in keeping with the elaborate segmentation of the clans in which this office is vested, are more equal in status. But in every cluster of closely interdependent contiguous clans there is one tɛndaana who ranks higher than his confreres. The Gbizug tɛndaana ranks above the tɛndaanas of Zubiuŋ, Gbeog, and Wakii, and the Doo tɛndaana above the other Tɛnzugu tɛndaanas.

As we have seen, the Earth cult and the External *Bɔyar* cult function as polar opposites in the structural dynamics of the Hill Talis' clan system.[2] In terms of politico-ritual office it is chiefship and tɛndaanaship that have this polar relationship. Within a particular clan and between interdependent contiguous clans the complementary politico-ritual roles of chief (or his equivalent) and tɛndaana form the axis about which the body of moral, jural, and ritual values that binds the community into a unity revolves. Such a community may be a clan (as, for example, Dkoog) or a cluster of interdependent clans (as, for instance, Tongo and its immediate neighbours); and at the times of the Great Festival, the community that emerges includes all the Tallensi and some non-Tallensi.

Chiefs and tɛndaanas had no political power, as we understand it, before the coming of the white man. They had no administrative, or executive, and only rudimentary judicial powers. They were the leaders and not the rulers, the fathers and not the princes of their clans. Where the social ends served by the native political system are concerned, this pat-

[1] We are concerned here with the role of these politico-ritual offices in the native social system as it was before the establishment of British rule and as it still functions vigorously in situations that fall outside the orbit of the British Administration's sanctions and demands. It is convenient, however, to follow the usage of the Administration in calling the functionary who holds the office of *na'am* a chief rather than overload our analysis with an excess of native titles. But there is no comparison between Tale 'chiefs' and the rulers of great African nations like the Ashanti or Bemba, or even the chiefs of southern Bantu tribes. Cf. *African Political Systems* previously cited. My article in that book deals more fully with the subject of this section.

[2] Cf. Chap. VII.

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Elsewhere their differentiation and relationship are obscured by the fusion of the two roles in a single office or by the subdivision and distribution of the two roles among a group of offices.

Broadly speaking, however, chiefship symbolizes the plexus of social relationships, based on lineage and kinship, which unites a defined group of people into a community, and tendaanaship symbolizes the bonds of men, as members of a community, with land, locality, and the material earth. Chiefship and tendaanaship are ritual offices because the principles of social structure they stand for are so fundamental that they appear to the natives as axiomatic. Projected on to the ritual plane, they are transformed into unchallengeable values and so become beacons that guide men's behaviour. Both chiefship and tendaanaship are vested in maximal lineages and therefore have the ritual sanction of the ancestor cult; both are associated with the organization of the Tallensi into local communities and the utilization of natural resources, and therefore have the sanction of the Earth cult. But in their complementary conjunction the emphasis in the chiefship is on its transmission from the ancestors, while the emphasis in the tendaanaship is on its specific ritual bonds with the mystical Earth.

This is brought out by one curious point of difference between the burial customs of Namoos and those of most non-Namoo clans. Namoos bury their dead at the entrance to the homestead, so that the ancestral graves of every segment of a lineage are separate. Men know the graves of their particular forebears and the graves of remoter ancestors who are significant for the structure of the lineage. The tombs of chiefs, in particular, are known and cared for by their agnatic descendants. Namoos also sacrifice to a particular ancestor on his grave. Clans which have tendaanas usually bury their dead in cemeteries within the settlement. They do not sacrifice to their ancestors on their graves and within two generations forget which is the grave of a particular individual. In other respects their ancestor cult is exactly the same as that of the Namoos. In clans that have the chiefship (*naditib*), the natives explain, the most important thing is for every man to be able to show exactly how he is connected by descent with previous holders of the chiefship; whereas in *tendaanditib* clans this is unimportant as all the members of the clan have the same ritual bonds with the Earth.

The Tendaana's Toy

Everywhere in Taleland men utilize the earth's resources in the same way and owe respect to the mystical powers of the Earth. But the natural resources of the Earth are of direct importance for them at particular places—where they farm, build their homesteads, hunt, fish, or collect bush products. It is at these places that the mystical power of the Earth impinges directly on their lives. Men's utilitarian interests in the earth's surface are sectional, not global; and so also are their social interests in it since they are divided into maximal lineages and clans which are precisely localized. Thus the earth's surface is divided into sections relatively to the social organization of the Tallensi. Each section has its own Earth shrines for the worship of the Earth at that place, and they are in the

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segment of the lineage whose head always takes the title of *Yikpɛmdaan*[1] and has the duty of sacrificing to the collective ancestors of the lineage on behalf of all its members. Among clans that have tɛndaanas the senior tɛndaana often has to build his homestead on the site of the founding ancestor's homestead; and when a tɛndaana dies his successor takes possession of the ancestral homestead and his children move out. But many other arrangements exist all serving the same end of keeping alive the idea of the lineage home.

In the lineage we are discussing the three homesteads of the members stand on ancestral land quite close to the graves of the lineage ancestors, Doohraan, Damtii, and Nɔpugzabɔr. When Deemzeet formally became the head of the lineage his homestead housed the lineage *bɔyar* and other shrines of its common ancestors, and his gateway became the lineage *zanɔr*. The ancestral graves of this lineage are actually on land owned by its members. This is not always the case. Changes in the ownership of land as the population shifts frequently result in the land surrounding the ancestral graves of a lineage-segment passing into the hands of members of another segment of the same lineage, sometimes even into the hands of members of a neighbouring clan. The spot continues, nevertheless, to be regarded as the *daboog* of the lineage whose ancestral graves lie there. The conception of the lineage home is split. For jural and social purposes it is the *de facto* home of the lineage, the place where its head actually resides. The site of the ancestral home, marked by the graves of the ancestors, comes to be regarded primarily as the religious focus of the lineage.

The Influence of Lineage Localization in the Social Life

This fact, that in the older settlements the core of a lineage is a locally organized unit, and that its location is associated with its ancestor spirits on the one hand and its patrimonial land on the other, moulds the entire life of its members. The corporate unity and identity of a lineage is a real and tangible thing when its male members can see one another every day, and when most of them, certainly most of their leading men, can gather together easily and in a very short time to consider and take action in affairs of common interest. Classificatory kinship is no mere formality where an individual's childhood companions are his or her own siblings and ortho-cousins of various degrees; where a man's daily intercourse is carried on chiefly with close agnatic kinsmen, and almost entirely with men of the same patrilineal descent, in his section or settlement; where a man can readily, and indeed is compelled to, by the fact of physical accessibility in a culture lacking rapid and indirect means of communication, have immediate and almost exclusive recourse to his patrilineal kin for help in economic activities, support in maintaining his rights or performing his duties, advice and guidance in the conduct of his life, or solace in misfortune. Ceremonial co-operation is not an empty formula

[1] Tallensi are poor etymologists and various equally plausible etymologies are suggested for this title. The most probable is that it is compounded of *yir*, house; *kpiim*, spirits of the dead, and *daana*, custodian or master. This can be translated 'Custodian of the House of the Spirits of the Lineage Ancestors'.

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778 The graves of Sɛyahəg and Bəyada lie within a couple of minutes' walk
769 of each other and of Mosuor's baobab in Puhug. Though Bəyada's grave is in the middle of the home farm of a Puhug man, its custody is vested in Kuorəg, whose head comes to sacrifice there periodically. Similarly Siiyɛŋ, Kəbər, and Bəyayiedət, the ancestors of Guŋ and Dekpieŋ, lie buried at Guŋ proper, at the *daboog* of this *yizug*, though the majority of their descendants live at Dekpieŋ.

173 For the people of Tongo—and this also applies to all Tallensi except
764 the Hill Talis—the disposition of graves maps out the gradual increase or diminution in numbers of the clan or any segment of the clan through the generations, and its gradual territorial expansion or retraction. Thus Tɛndaan Gɛnət's house site and grave in the centre of Puhug are accepted as proof that the Gbizugdɛm lived there at the time of Mosuor's arrival and were gradually pushed out to their present location by the spreading of Mosuor's progeny. The founding ancestor of Zubiuŋ Yakəradɛm, Gɛnət's putative brother, is also believed to have lived at Puhug at that remote period, and they, too, are said to have been dispossessed by Mosuor biis. Similarly the location of Bəyada's grave is proof to the natives that the growing numbers of Puhugdɛm caused his descendants to withdraw gradually into what is now Kuorəg.

Structure of the Clan Settlement among non-Namoos

613 Among Talis as well as Namoos in the older part of Taleland, the clan
621 settlement is built up round the lineage in this way. In composite clans
764 the tendency is always for each constituent maximal lineage to form a locally distinct though not strictly demarcated aggregate, and for the segments of these *yizugət* to follow the same rule more markedly. The correlation of residence with lineage, ancestral lands, and the graves of the ancestors holds. At Zubiuŋ, at Ba'ari, and among the non-Namoo clans living in the vicinity of Yaməlag and Sie—the group of clans which the Hill Talis regard as having been culturally influenced by the Namoos—a person is buried among his own (or her husband's) immediate forebears near the homestead. The Hill Talis bury their dead in small cemeteries, each section (*yizug*) or main segment (*dug*) of a section usually
● [184 having its own. Among all the Talis and the non-Namoos of the Sie
778] district a sacred grove (*tɔŋgban*) or an External *Bəyar* takes the place of the sacred dancing-ground at Tongo as the local and spiritual focus of the settlement. The homestead of the *yizug* head, housing the most important shrines of its ancestors, whatever his ritual office may be, is often fixed, so that when a man succeeds to the office he takes possession also of the homestead that goes with it; thus the idea of the home of the maximal lineage has an everlasting and consecrated embodiment in the actual homestead occupied by its head.

184 Among the clans which have tɛndaanas the local anchorage of the
793 clan and of its constituent maximal lineages is, in some respects, even
621 stronger than among the Namoos. It is more conspicuously wrought into their institutions and more obviously sacrosanct, since the office of tɛndaana presupposes very special ritual bonds, the strongest bonds known to the Tallensi, of a maximal lineage with locality.

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framework in politically centralized societies. Tale political relations are dominated by the facts of genealogical connexion on the one hand, and by the bonds of ritual interdependence on the other.

Looking only at the macroscopic structure of Tale society, therefore, we realize that it is a very complicated mosaic in which every tie between corporate units is counterbalanced by cleavages between them, all loyalties between corporate units are kept within bounds by loyalties towards other units, and all common interests are set off by divergent interests. The Tallensi provide an interesting example of a society in which there is a very strong tendency towards a general equilibrium in the collective life. What we have called Tale society is a social region demarcated by the range of the dynamic equilibrium that prevails within it. Non-Tale means simply outside this equilibrium; or rather, to be precise, it means on and beyond the circumference of this equilibrium. This is the essential difference between societies like the Tallensi and those that derive their unity from defined territorial boundaries and subjection to a common, all-powerful government. That does not mean that a segmentary social structure and a pyramidal social structure are necessarily mutually exclusive. It is quite possible for the subdivisions of a centralized state to have a segmentary social organization.

Re-examination of the Major Cleavage: Warfare

Through this mosaic, however, runs a major cleavage of great significance, as we have learnt. It is most conspicuous in the Tongo area. For this there may be historical reasons, but we have no means of discovering them. What is beyond question is that this fact is a fundamental feature of the existing structure of the society. Tongo is the most important centre of Namoo settlement; the Tong Hills area is the pivot of the ritual cults and values which play so dominant a part in Tale political relations. In consequence, the cleavage upon which the whole politico-ritual system hinges is most conspicuous there.

When Tallensi discuss the cleavage between Namoos and non-Namoos, they often hark back to the wars of former days. There are still old men living who took part in the last of those wars, and many middle-aged men and women tell tales of the fighting they saw as children or heard of from their parents; these wars are also a common theme of funeral dirges.

But the Tallensi are not one of those warlike African peoples who have a hypnotic effect even on anthropologists. Like most peasants who wring a bare subsistence from the soil, they have much too prosaic an attachment to their homes, their families, and their farms, and much too lively an appreciation of the perils of commonplace living to overrate the warrior. Not that Tallensi are lacking in physical courage or combativeness. They are quick to resent a trespass on their rights and readily snatch up a weapon or missile if they are provoked. In the old days a fearless and successful fighter (*zai*, pl. *za'ab*) was admired. The deeds of some of these great fighters of old are still recounted with pride. To kill an enemy in war was something to boast of. It was a mark of manliness as well as an important service to the clan. But there was a dark side

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CHAPTER VIII

TENSIONS IN THE PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIP

Rivalry between Parents and Children

593 578 PERHAPS the most extraordinary feature of Tale parents' relations with their children is the recognition, in custom and belief, of the latent antagonism behind their mutual identification and comradeship, their devotion and co-operation. We have already had some glimpses of this. A psycho-analyst might say that the Oedipus complex is apparently openly recognized in Tale culture. He would have to add that it is built into their social organization in such a way as to enable them to control it. The mystical ideas and ritual symbols in which the rivalry between successive generations is clothed form the cultural mechanism by which it is neutralized and made to serve socially useful ends.

784 [184] 578 593 We have discussed the taboos observed by first-born children among the Namoos in our previous book. We showed there[1] that the distinguishing mark of all Namoo clans as opposed to non-Namoo clans is the observance of these taboos. Among all Namoos a man's first-born son and daughter may not eat the domestic fowl, may not wear any of their father's garments or his quiver, or look into his granary during his lifetime. The latter taboos are connected with the fact that a man's clothes and quiver and granary are intimately identified with his social personality. As the natives put it, a man's clothes and quiver are imbued with his bodily exuviae from constant contact with his body, while his granary is associated with his unique status in the patricentral family. It is easy to see that these possessions are peculiarly apt symbols of a man's social self. It is not surprising, therefore, that though these taboos are not formally observed by non-Namoos analogous usages with the same symbolic significance occur among them.

In our previous book we studied the significance of these taboos as quasi-totemic symbols in the system of inter-clan relations; but they have other dimensions of meaning as well, like all Tale customs and ideas that give expression to fundamental elements in their social organization. For they go back to deep and universal tendencies in human psychology. These taboos have a particular meaning in the contemporary structure of Tale society as symbols of corporate units; but underlying this is the deeper meaning they have in the relations of successive generations and for the individual himself in the conduct of his life.

We are concerned here with these latter aspects of their meaning. We cannot attempt to unravel all that lies behind them, but their super-

[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, chs. v and viii.

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crowning achievement of his life, the most significant sign that his *Yin* has prospered him (*maal*) well. The relations of father and son are a balance between their ties of solidarity and mutual identification, which form the central link of the lineage system, and the cleavage due to their belonging to successive generations. Once more we encounter the fundamental

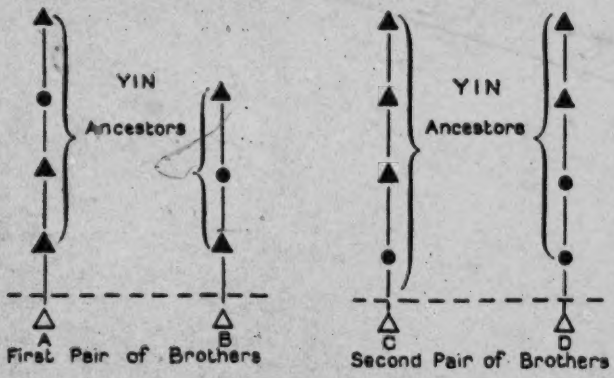

FIG. 5. *Yin* Ancestors.

principle of Tale social organization, that every constellation of social relationships is made up of a polar balance of ties and cleavages.

The Discrimination between Oldest Children and Youngest Children

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The cleavage between father and first son obviously plays an important part in the cycle of development of the joint family and lineage. The oldest son's breakaway from the parental home is the first phase of fission of the joint family, and it is not until after his father's death that he and his brothers are likely to become reunited into a single domestic unit.

We have spoken sometimes as if the cleavage between successive generations lay solely between parents and their first-born children, at other times as if it were a gulf between parents and all their children. In practice, tension crops up between a parent and any of his or her adolescent or adult children, but one reason why it is always likely to be sharpest with oldest children is simply because they have gone farthest along the road of social and economic maturity and so symbolize the filial generation most effectively of all the children. Among non-Namoos it does not seem to matter whether the oldest children are first-born or merely the oldest surviving children. Among the Namoos, however, there is the striking peculiarity of their fixing the ritual and affective bar between the generations on the first-born children. If a man's first-born son is dead, and even if he died in infancy, the oldest living son does not assume the taboos of the first-born. The

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tension that develops between a father and his oldest surviving son is never as great as that which occurs between a man and his first-born son. An oldest surviving son may in time begin to farm on his own, but he will very often stay in his father's homestead, for his *Yin* is not a danger to his father's.

Tallensi have no explanation for this. Their only comment is to point to the fact, which can often be observed, that parents discriminate between their older children and their younger children, especially between the oldest and the youngest. Youngest children are the favourites, upon whom they lavish all their tenderness when they have long ceased to make a show of affection for the older children. A man's or a woman's last child (*bikpa'ar*) is the apple of its parent's eye. Tallensi say that a last child is always spoiled and pampered, and therefore grows up to be vain, lazy, and extravagant. Guna'ab was a man of this stamp, and his older brothers explained contemptuously that he had been their mother's *bikpa'ar* and they had been unable to discipline him after their father's death.

Tallensi say that a person's younger children, and in particular the youngest child, feel their dependence on their parents till the last. There is, as in so many aspects of the relations of parents and children, an element of reciprocity in this. For a man's youngest son, for instance, is still farming with him when his oldest son is farming either wholly or partly for himself—'thinking of how to feed his wife and children rather than of his parents', they often say. 'If I die to-day', men have said to me, 'do you think my oldest son will weep? Oh no; but my youngest son, he will shed bitter tears.' There is much truth in this. I have more than once seen a man's youngest son being harshly rated by an older brother for abandoning himself to grief over his father's death. Because older children no longer need their parents' care they do not inspire the same affection as young children. In the eyes of the natives, therefore, the discrimination between youngest and oldest children is a natural result of the process of upbringing. But I have heard women say, also, that a woman's love for her *bikpa'ar* is due to her seeing in him the sign of the end of her reproductive powers.

It is, however, not merely a matter of the vagaries of parental psychology. This discrimination runs deeply into the social structure of the Tallensi. A curious but enlightening indication of this occurs with divining (*bakologo*) shrines. When a diviner dies, the clairvoyant power associated with his shrine sometimes passes on to one of his sons by a process which the Tallensi think of as a kind of mystical contagion (*lɔŋ*). The son who is selected for this privilege is always a younger son. There is more sympathy between father and younger son than between father and oldest son. But the best indication of this is found at funeral ceremonies, where the oldest and the youngest children of the deceased have distinctive mourning duties. The oldest son and oldest daughter,

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128 'patterns of behaviour', hence they neglect or slur over variations, and sometimes indeed build whole theories on a single occurrence. For most problems of social anthropology variations are of minor importance as compared with the 'typical', and an all-round knowledge of a culture is a sufficient check of typicality. For problems of developmental psychology variations may be of the utmost
158 importance. For example, the first case of thumb-sucking I observed was that of a girl infant 3–4 years old whose mother had recently died. Could it be assumed that this was a clear-cut instance of the thumb being substituted for the nipple? Some time later I came across another little girl, about the same age, thumb-sucking, but her mother was alive and she was not yet fully weaned. Further observation brought a few more cases of this habit to light, but it is so infrequent among Tale children that a single year's observation does not yield sufficient instances to suggest any correlation.

Generally speaking, therefore, small samples form the basis of the observations recorded in this paper. Where norms of development are implied it will be understood that an appreciable, though indeterminable, variability exists.

III. Social Sphere of the Tale Child

●184 The process of education among the Tallensi, as among a great
155 many other African peoples of analogous culture, is intelligible when it is recognized that the social sphere of adult and child[1] is unitary and undivided. In our own society the child's feeling and thinking and acting takes place largely in relation to a reality—to aims, responsibilities, compulsions, material objects and persons, and so forth—which differs completely from that of the adult, though sometimes overlapping it. This dichotomy is not only expressed in our customs, it comes out also in the psychological reactions which mark the indivi-

[1] I am aware that the unqualified manner in which this proposition is formulated here invites the immediate objection that it cannot possibly hold for the new-born infant, or even for the child who is inarticulate and does not yet walk or crawl. I would suggest in answer that it is impossible empirically to observe the point at which the child's affective orientation to its cultural environment first receives its bias; and also, that recent psychology and anthropology would support me in attaching basic importance to the earliest infantile responses of a child as determinants of later interests.

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dual's transition from the child's world to the adult's—e.g. the so-called negative phase or adolescent instability which has been alleged to be universal in our society.[1] It is unknown in Tale society.[2] As between adults and children, in Tale society, the social sphere is differentiated only in terms of relative capacity. All participate in the same culture, the same round of life, but in varying degrees, corresponding to the stage of physical and mental development. Nothing in the universe of adult behaviour is hidden from children or barred to them. They are actively and responsibly part of the social structure, of the economic system, the ritual and ideological system. Psychological effects of fundamental importance for Tale education follow from this. For it means that the child is from the beginning oriented towards the same reality as its parents and has the same physical and social material upon which to direct its cognitive and instinctual endowment. The interests, motives, and purposes of children are identical with those of adults, but at a simpler level of organization. Hence the children need not be coerced to take a share in economic and social activities. They are eager to do so. This does not mean that Tale children are altogether passive in the hands of their parents. Temperamental idiosyncrasies in children strike the observer at a glance. Tantrums, disobedience, destructiveness, and other aggressive outbursts occur sometimes. Among youths and adults misfits and incompetents can be found. But even they live for the same ends and have the same objective values and interests as the majority.

The unity of the social sphere is the more marked in Tale society since they have almost no social stratification within a genealogical or local community. There are no class or rank cleavages, nor highly organized and exclusive economic, political, or ritual associations cutting across the local, genealogical segmentation; and the social division of labour is rudimentary. The pattern of existence is the same for all members of a given community, varying only in texture or tone from individual to individual. The social sphere is differentiated only as between communities which are generally localized clans or lineages. Thus, the blacksmith lineage of Sakpee is unique, as

[1] See G. Murphy, *Experimental Social Psychology*, pp. 429–32, for a critical discussion of this question.

[2] Cf. also Margaret Mead, *Coming of Age in Samoa*.

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compared with its neighbours, in respect to those components of its culture connected with its craft. Only sons of that lineage may be taught the craft of the smith; and even those who through lack of inclination or ability do not learn it share the ideology associated with it and submit to ritual and moral constraints in virtue of this. Because of their traditional craft the men of Sakpee do not eat the hedgehog until they have successfully made a piece of ironwork; and when they were driven from the Tong Hills, abandoned their homes and property but carried with them the sacred anvils. Similarly, the social sphere of the Hill Tallis contrasts in many respects with that of their Namoo neighbours on account of their different ritual systems.

Yet it is necessary to note that these differences do not detract from the essential homogeneity of the social sphere for all the Tallensi. They are differences in the substance of some cultural definitions, not in the forms and functions of institutions. The totemic taboos of the Hill Tallis are exactly paralleled by the prohibitions of first-born children eating the domestic fowl among the Namoos. What their sacred groves and initiation rites mean to the former, their first ancestor, sacred drums, and the chiefship mean to the latter. The psychological substratum of social behaviour is the same in both groups and in their associated clans, with a sole exception. The initiation cult of the Hill Tallis does give a bias to their ideology and so to their social sphere which the Namoos lack.[1] In our present inquiry these differences may be neglected since the dynamic relationships of the individual to his community are the same everywhere in Taleland. Whether a child is trained as a blacksmith or as a farmer, and whether he is inducted into the ritual and ideology of the ancestor cult alone, or into that of the sacred groves as well, the principles are the same.

This background will be continuously discerned in our study of Tale education. But a few clinching observations may be cited here to show that the child is not merely a supernumerary element of his society but thinks and feels himself to be a part of it.

1. I was walking with Samane and his two small sons (8–9 years)[2]

[1] See M. Fortes, 'Ritual Festivals and Social Cohesion in the Hinterland of the Gold Coast', *American Anthropologist*, vol. xxxviii, no. 4.

[2] All ages are estimated, but the probable error of such an estimate is at least 12 months.

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184 867 463 The specific genealogical links of a family act in a similar way. In the extreme case, they may alter a person's whole life. The story of Puvələmra is typical, though such occurrences are not usual. He was a Kpatia man whose parents had died in his boyhood. For special reasons he had come to live with his mother's brother at Gbizug. There he grew up, and when I met him, a man of 35–40, he was to all intents a Gbizug man, a complete partisan of that lineage, professing its ideology, subject to its ritual restrictions, and practising the craft of leatherwork as he had learnt it from his mother's brother. He will probably return to Kpatia when he succeeds to his patrimony, there to be assimilated to a rather different ritual system, but transmitting to his sons and grandsons the art of leatherwork and the habits of industry learnt from his mother's brother. Many Tale lineages trace peculiar features of their residence or kinship, or the possession of special ritual, medical, or technological knowledge, to an ancestor with a history like that of Puvələmra.

592 622 861 Finally, the phase of family history coinciding with an early period of a person's education—the status of one or more senior members of his family, or the holding of ritual or political office by any of them —may have a significant differentiating influence on his or her social space. The homestead of a lineage or clan head is the focus of intercommunication both of the constituent parts of that grouping, the sublineages and joint families, and of the lineage or clan with its neighbours, not only in secular affairs but also in ritual matters. This is even more evident with people who hold offices. There is a constant coming and going of people at the house of a chief or clan-head: a complainant has brought a case to lay before the chief; the elders of the clan have come to consult him about the rain; somebody's daughter recently married has deserted her husband and the indignant son-in-law is brought to the clan-head to discuss the affair; a distant cognatic kinsman has brought a goat to sacrifice to the spirit of the supreme ancestor of the lineage; orders have been received that the young men must turn out for rest-house repairs in two or three days; and so forth. Transactions of this sort generally take place in public and the children of the house are always avid listeners. If any one has to be summoned or a message delivered a youth or a small boy is sent.

184 867 The members of such a house, especially those who have reached

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or passed adolescence, have a wider range of direct contacts with the social structure and their culture than their less privileged contemporaries. In Taleland, it is true, these differences tend to get smoothed out in the course of a person's lifetime owing to the uniformity of the culture and the homogeneity and cohesion of the social structure. Every lineage or clan member is at home in the house of the head, and important affairs are never discussed unless every branch of the grouping is represented. Again, eldership and office circulate from sublineage to sublineage, and the classificatory kinship system spreads the range of identification between the units of the structure widely. Nevertheless, the differential influence of this factor is significant from the educational point of view since our emphasis is on the stage of an individual's life-history at which it operates. The effects are strikingly observable both at the time it is operating and especially in the character of the mature man or woman. An amusing instance of the former is the following: Deɔmzeet of Puhug was elected elder under somewhat dramatic circumstances. Next morning, near his homestead I met his small grandsons of about 6–7 years old. Quite spontaneously they started telling me the story of the exciting events of the past two or three days, obviously repeating the talk that they had heard and only half understood in the family circle. They told me what the other elders had said and what the chief had said and how Deɔmzeet had summoned a diviner to consult. 'Deɔmzeet is the father of all of us,' said one of them, 'and he has a big farm.' They ran off to show me the boundaries of the farm he had recently inherited as head of the sublineage. As we passed the family graves they pointed out, solemnly, the tomb of Deɔmzeet's predecessor, who had no doubt been frequently referred to in the last few days. These were all matters which would normally not have occurred within the purview of children of their age.

Instances of the effect on his adult character of such an expansion of an individual's social space during his youth were so numerous as to suggest a general rule. I always found that, allowing for variation in ability and personality, men whose fathers had been elders or office-holders at a time when they themselves were old enough to take an interest in public affairs as spectators or participants were better informed than the average person, and tended to assume the lead in

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social and ritual activities. The natives themselves recognize this. It often happens that a man who has not had the advantage of such a training succeeds to eldership or office and has to depend upon the advice and assistance of younger men who have been more fortunate in this respect

IV. The Dynamic Characters of Tale Education

Learning and teaching proceeds within the structural framework and subject to the cultural conceptions outlined in the preceding pages. We must now investigate its dynamic characters. The educational development of a Tale child may be regarded as the gradual acquisition of an ensemble of *interests*, *observances* and *skills*. What these are and how they are acquired constitutes our next inquiry. It is basically a psychological problem, tantamount, up to a point, to analysing the observations already recorded at a different level of behaviour.

An exhaustive investigation will not be attempted in this paper. The detailed exposition of Tale child psychology which should be the foundation of such an investigation cannot be undertaken here, nor would it be practicable to try to follow out the complex pattern of Tale education in all its ramifications in a limited space. I propose, therefore, to discuss only a few of the major trends and significant processes. Learning and teaching is a composite process, a network of interacting factors. For the purpose of analysis it will be necessary to isolate some of the variables, but it will have to be borne in mind that in the actual life-history of a Tale man or woman they occur only in interaction with one another and with numerous others.

The determinants of social behaviour. From the genetic point of view social behaviour is determined by four groups of factors—physiological, psychological, social, and cultural. If we observe a child learning to walk, we can easily distinguish these factors. It cannot start walking until it has reached a certain degree of physiological maturity. As it practises it learns to plan its efforts so as to avoid falls or trying to accomplish too much at a time—a psychological achievement, depending partly on its level of intelligence. Again, a child learns to walk in response, partly, to stimulation, encouragement and even training given by some or all of the people who come

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184 Namoos and Tallis have a common cultural idiom, just as they have a single language. Their economic system is uniform and inclusive of both communities; their laws of land tenure, of inheritance and successions, of marriage and legitimacy are identical. The ritual practices and the mystical notions of their religious and magical institutions are the same in form and dynamical character, even if they sometimes differ in content, especially in the domestic cult of the ancestors. This common corpus of social definitions and of pragmatic organization is the inevitable correlate of the conditions of social and economic intercourse normally prevailing between the two communities. They have been intermarrying for generations, and this entails common legal techniques and principles, as well as a single type of domestic organization. They exchange commodities in trade, gifts, and in the discharge of kinship obligations: for every Namoo has numerous cognatic kinsmen among the Tallis and the Tallis among the Namoos. Kindred come into frequent contact with one another, not only on ritual occasions, such as sacrifices to ancestors and in funeral ceremonies, but also in ordinary social and personal affairs.

621 622 793 Upon this homogenous basis of social and economic relations between individuals and familial groupings is superposed a political structure the essential principle of which is a polar opposition defined and emphasized by the most stringent ritual observances. The head of the Tongo Namoos has the title Naa or Chief. The chieftanship (naam) was brought to Tongo by its founder, Mosur, from Mampurugu. It remains the absolute prerogative of his descendants. Every new chief of Tongo buys his rank from an hereditary elector who represents the chief of Mampurugu. The colonies and co-clans of Tongo elect chiefs of lesser grade. But no Tallis may hold the title Naa. Their heads of clans and lineages are typically entitled Tendaana, (literally "owner of the land"). The principal Tendaanaships in the land are attained by rights of patrilineal succession. The chief of Tongo claims suzerainty over all the Tale settlements. Actually his executive authority reaches only to his own settlement, while a Tendaana's executive authority hardly extends beyond his own lineage. Balancing the chiefs' political claims, the Tendaanas assert their precedence in virtue of their "ownership of the land." Moreover, each of the principal Tendaanas claims precedence over all the others, such is the degree of local autonomy. Normally an occasion never arises where these rival claims can be pitted against one another. They are vaunted in the presence of the ethnologist, or in the ritual and domestic assemblies of kinsfolk.

784 184 Chief and Tendaana, Namoos and Tallis, are further separated by a barrier of taboos, many of them symbolic. The chief may not tread upon

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the earth with his bare foot; he may not pluck a blade of grass or engage in agriculture, and so on. Tendaanas observe none of these taboos. They again may not wear any cloth garment, but only skins, for a white gown of cloth is put upon the chief at his investiture. Cloth garments, horses, guns, are traditionally tabooed to all Tallis, since they were characteristic of the Namoos. Chief and Tendaana regard these taboos as of the very substance of their respective offices, as moral obligations to their respective communities. So also property lost on the land or stray animals must be handed over to a Tendaana on pain of supernaturally inflicted death. But stray cows, dogs, or vagrant humans go to the chief. Most important of all, the religious practices of the Tallis are dominated by the cult of the earth shrines (tɔŋbana)—sacred groves, streams, pools, etc.—to which the Namoos as a group have no access.

The polarity thus institutionally registered is paralleled by standardized political attitudes. In the sporadic fights of pre-European days Tallis and Namoos were traditional enemies. This is not only recollected in tales but vividly expressed in the military pantomine which accompanies every funeral ceremony. Tallis at their funerals fling taunts and challenges at the Namoos, and the latter retaliate at their funerals. When his patriotism is aroused, a member of one group will speak of the other group superciliously or derogatorily, forgetting for the moment, perhaps, that they are his own mother's kinsmen.

Between Chief and Tendaana, between Namoos and Tallis, there are barriers, but not a gulf, an equilibrium and not an irreconciliable disjunction. The fulcrum of this equilibrium is the Tendaana of the Gbizug lineage. Geographically placed between the Namoos and the Tallis, he is the ritual and political mediator between them. The principal Tendaana of Baari can directly approach the Chief of Tongo; but the Tendaanas of the Hill Tallis or of non-Tale clans can only approach the Chief through the Gbizug Tendaana. In the old days it was he who made peace between the traditional enemies after a fight. A ritual and social equilibrium of high tension exists between Gbizug and Tongo, symbolized in the peculiar relations of the Tendaana and the Chief. Tradition, distorted by each side to its own aggrandizement, relates that it was the first Gbizug Tendaana who received and gave land to settle on to the ancestor of the Tongo Namoos. The final and most solemn of the rites by which a new chief of Tongo is inducted, rites which will be referred to again, must be carried out by the Gbizug Tendaana. Upon him rests the responsibility and the privilege of making the sacrifices for the most sacrosanct fetish of the Tongo Chieftainship, that which safeguards the life and well-being of the Chief and thus